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HOPE.

BY W. W.

Sweet comforter of lonely hours,
Beguiler of dark woes and pain,
Thou hast been absent from my heart,
But come, sweet friend, to me again
Turn the shadows hov'ring round me
Into beams of dazzling light;
Sing me songs in joyous measure,
Happy-hearted, lovely sprite.

Point me to a happier future,
Tell me of bright joys in store,
Tell me that the heavy sorrows
I have felt will come no more.
Raise my sad, desponding spirits,
Let my heart be light again,
Break the fetters which now bind me
Break, I pray thee, misery's chain.

Let sweet buds of joy and gladness
Open all along my day,
Let bright spirits drive all sadness
And dark gloom and grief away.
Oh! sweet, joyous-hearted creature
Lead me in the path of right,
Strew the way that leads to Heaven
With blessings, joy, and actions bright.

OUT IN THE WORLD

BY THE AUTHOR OF "OLD MIDDLETON'S MONEY," "NORA'S LOVE TEST," "A SHADOW ON THE THRESHOLD."

CHAPTER XXVII—(CONTINUED.)

THEY reverently covered the body with a sheet, and, taking up the bier upon which it rested, carried it across the moor to the cottage. A large portion of the crowd followed; the Earl, Stannard, and Benson followed also, as if they could not tear themselves away. They had to pass close to the spot over which the murdered man had been thrust, and every eye looked in its direction—every eye, excepting that of Stannard Marshbank. There was, indeed, no need for him to look. The whole scene danced before his mental vision in lurid colors.

They entered the cottage, and Mr. Benson, in a few grave words, dispersed the crowd. The policeman, who had walked next the bier, set something down which he had been carrying. It was a gun. As he did so, he saw another gun standing in the corner.

He looked from it to the one he had just put out of his hand, with a stolid kind of surprise.

"Whose gun is that?" he asked, in a whisper, of Warner.

He had to repeat the question, in an ordinary voice, and those present looked at Warner, and waited for the answer. Before he could reply, a man galloped up on horseback, and flung himself down at the door. It was Mr. Jones, the inspector, from Newton.

He was a tall, spare man, with small, gray eyes, and close-shaven face. He had occupied a very good position in the London force, but his health had broken down, and he had obtained a post in the country, which, though it was not of equal importance to that which he had held in town, had the advantage of affording him some means of recuperating.

He entered, and at once took possession of the case with calm self-reliance.

"Six men are coming from Newton," he said to the constable. "Post them round the place where the body was found, and round the edge of the quarry."

"Done a'ready, sir," said the constable, with pardonable satisfaction.

"Good," said the inspector. "Don't let any suspicious character leave the village. Arrest them, if necessary. Who's your best-known poacher, here?"

The constable, trying not to be confused by the sharp, quick questions, gave the names of two or three of the most notorious.

"Just give them a hint that I shall want to talk with them," said the inspector; "and tell them that it's no use their trying to escape. The line's blocked, and I've got patrols already on the road. Though I expect, my lord," he added, in a lower voice to the Earl, "the man, or men, who did this have got off by this time."

The Earl flushed slightly. "They must not be allowed to escape," he said, with a touch of hauteur, which was really the expression of the indignation which filled his breast. "The man was a good and faithful servant of mine; a man I respected. He died in the discharge of his duty while protecting my property. I offer a reward of one hundred pounds for any information that may lead to the conviction of the murderer or murderers."

"And I," said Stannard, in a voice which seemed to echo the Earl's emotion. "I will offer another hundred."

"Thank you, Stannard," said the Earl, almost in a whisper.

The inspector bowed gravely. "You need have no fear, my lord," he said. "Whoever they are, we shall have them within a few hours. The men who have done this clumsy murder have left too many clues behind them. It is simply impossible for him or them to escape.

Just for one instant Stannard Marshbank's face contracted, as if a sharp pain had shot through him, and he said—

"I am very, very glad to hear you say so."

Mr. Jones turned to the constable, who was waiting on the threshold of the door to see if there were any more instructions for him.

"Any weapon found near the body?" he asked.

The constable took up the gun. Stannard watched him out of the corners of his eyes.

"Only this, sir," he said.

Jones took the gun in his hand. Warner, standing on the other side of the body, looked up.

"No, not that," he said, heavily. "This was Ralph's gun." And he brought the other gun forward.

"No, it isn't," said the constable. "This is the gun I found lying beside the body. I've only just put it down. I've had it in my charge ever since I found it."

The inspector looked from one to the other. "You are sure?" he said.

Stannard Marshbank appeared to be listening with grave but calm interest, like the others, but his heart was throbbing madly.

"Quite sure, sir," said the constable. "When I put the gun I found against the wall just now, I saw the other gun in the corner, and I asked Warner whose it was, but he didn't hear me."

"That is right," said the Earl, in a low voice. "I heard him ask."

The inspector took out his knife and cut a notch on the stock of the gun he held.

"Whose is it?" he asked.

Warner stretched out a hand to take it, but the inspector drew it back. "Look at it, but don't touch it, please," he said.

"It's Bigley's, the third keeper's," said Warner.

A breathless silence followed the reply.

"Where is Bigley?" asked Jones.

"At the hospital at Newton," replied Warner.

"True," said the inspector. "I saw him this morning, when I was taking a case in. I suppose he left the gun here in Forster's charge?"

"No," said Warner, dully; "Ralph sent for it yesterday"

It cannot be said that the inspector's eyes grew sharper, for they were lynx-like already. Indeed, his tone grew almost casual, as he asked, "Who did he send?"

Warner fumbled at his lips. In his dazed condition he did not see the significance of the question, which was put almost soothingly; but the others did, and waited in breathless suspense.

They all saw that a great deal hung upon the inspector's question. Stannard Marshbank drew back a little behind the Earl, and watched the detective's face closely.

"He sent the fiddler for it," said Warner.

"Why did he do that?" asked the inspector. "Was his own gun out of repair?"

"No, he carried that all day," said Warner, "and brought it in in the evening. I know that, because I took it from the table and put it in the corner myself."

Mr. Jones closed the door with his back, and looked with almost a pleasant smile at Warner.

"What did he want the gun for?" he asked. "You can't use two guns at once, you know."

"It was to lend to the fiddler," said Warner. "He promised to help Ralph if there was any trouble with the poachers last night."

"Oh," said the inspector. He thought for a moment. "Let me see. The fiddler, as you call him, was a young fellow, who's been going about playing from place to place. He's a tall young man, very good looking, short but rather curly hair, and dark eyes. A gentlemanly-looking young fellow; rather like a swell?"

Warner nodded. "Yes," he said; "that's like him. He slept here the night before last. He was a very nice, quiet spoken young man. Every bit a gentleman, but for his fiddling."

"Oh, he slept here the night before last?" said Jones.

"Yes," said Warner, wearily; "and I thought that he'd stay last night, too. It was so understood; but he didn't come back."

"He didn't come back?" said Jones. "When did you see him last?"

Warner thought. "When did I see——" He looked round in a bewildered way. "It was last night, after tea. He went out, on the lookout for poachers, to help Ralph ——"

"And took the gun—this gun—with him?" said the inspector, blandly.

"Yes," said Warner. "I heard Ralph tell him to take it."

The inspector turned, with a little, swift movement, all his assumed suavity disappearing in an instant.

"I shall want a warrant for this man's arrest, my lord," he said, sharply. "Can you give me it here, or shall I come up to the Court?"

The Earl had been standing like a man turned to stone. His face was as white as death, his lips drawn. He had recognized the description of Heriot, had seen the drift of the inspector's questions, and knew, even before the man spoke, that he would be asked for the warrant for the arrest of his own son for a cruel and cowardly murder!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"SAY nothing, sir," Stannard whispered, huskily, in the Earl's ear.

The Earl, with bowed head, left the cottage, and went back to the Court, accompanied by Stannard and Jones. All the way Stannard's brain was buzzing. This turn of affairs was so sudden, so unexpected, that he was taken completely by surprise. He had never thought of Heriot in connection with the murder; but now, as he began to trace the line of suspicion which had arisen in the inspector's mind, he saw how black the case against Heriot could be made to look. They walked almost in silence to the Court. The Earl sank into his chair at his writing-table, and as Jones regarded him gravely, and with some surprise—for he had transacted magisterial business with the Earl before this, and always found him self-possessed and calmly dignified—Stannard said, in a low, troubled voice—

"Shall I tell Mr. Jones all that has happened, sir?"

The Earl made a gesture of assent with his hand, and Stannard turned to the inspector.

"Are you aware, Mr. Jones," he said, "that you have asked Lord Averleigh for a warrant against his son, Lord Fayne?"

The inspector started, and looked the horror he felt. "Lord Fayne, Mr. Marshbank! I ask for a warrant to arrest this itinerant fiddler!"

"And he," said Stannard, "is Lord Fayne. You may have heard something of Lord Fayne's career. It has been a wild and unfortunate one. He is fond of masquerading as a costermonger, as one of the lower orders. To gratify some whim, he has been assuming the character of a street musician—at least, I gather so from the description Warner gave."

The inspector looked bewildered for a moment. "Lord Fayne?" he said. "Yes, I have heard something of his lordship's eccentricity. Of course, if he was the fiddler, it alters the case considerably. It would be absurd to suspect Lord Fayne of the murder of his father's gamekeeper."

"Exactly. Of course," said Stannard, as if that settled the matter.

"Yes," said the inspector. Then he looked a little uneasy, and glanced at the Earl. "Er—when did you see Lord Fayne last, sir?" he asked.

Stannard hesitated. "Last night," he said.

"Here?" asked the inspector.

"No," said Stannard. "At Mr. Winsdale's, White Cot." He was beginning to get rather frightened; beginning to feel that the course of events was carrying him along as though on the irresistible tide of a deep river.

"Lord Fayne has gone back to London, or where?" asked the inspector.

"I—I—we do not know," replied Stannard.

Mr. Jones looked grave, and somewhat troubled. Duty and the love of his profession pulled his one way, and his disinclination to do anything that might annoy the Earl—for whom he had a profound respect—pulled him the other.

"As you may be aware," said Stannard, "the relations between Lord Averleigh and his son, Lord Fayne, are somewhat strained. They have not met for some time. Lord Fayne happened to enter White Cot last night, when Lord Averleigh, Lady Janet, and I were dining there."

"It is very strange," said Jones, in a low voice. "May I ask if Lord Fayne had a gun with him?"

"I think not," said Stannard. "No, certainly he had not. I must have seen it," he added.

"At what time did Lord Fayne go to White Cot?" asked Mr. Jones.

Stannard knit his brows, and looked at the Earl. He did not like to have to answer all these questions by himself. It would be well that he should not take too prominent a part in this inquiry.

"Really, I don't remember," he said. "Do you, sir? It was after dinner, I suppose, about ten o'clock."

The Earl raised his worn face. "It was not ten," he said.

The inspector made a mental note.

"I'm sorry to trouble you, sir," he said, "but may I ask you how long Lord Fayne stopped at White Cot? You will of course, see, my lord, the reason for my questions. I am trying to disconnect Lord Fayne from this murder, and to remove any suspicions there may be."

The Earl inclined his head.

"Of course!" said Stannard. "The idea of regarding Lord Fayne with suspicion is absurd. You ask me how long he remained at White Cot? He was only there a few minutes. They left almost immediately."

"They?" repeated Mr. Jones, with a kind of subdued sharpness. "Who were they?"

Stannard averted his head, as if he had committed a blunder.

"What are we to do, sir?" he said to the Earl. "Is it necessary to tell him about the scene of last night? It can have nothing whatever to do with the murder of poor Forster——"

Then he started, as if he suddenly saw how important and relevant to the inquiry all the incidents of last night were.

The inspector saw the start, and looked from one to the other, gravely.

"I am afraid I think you had better tell me everything there is to be told, sir. You see," with plain candor, "I should have to find it out some other way."

"Tell him," said the Earl, almost inaudibly.

"What happened was this," said Stannard, "Lord Fayne was followed to White Cot by a young woman, the daughter of Mrs. Warner, and by Ralph Forster."

The inspector's brows came down, and remained down, until Stannard had finished.

"The young woman accused Lord Fayne of having led her astray, and deserting her—at least so we gathered from what followed. Ralph Forster threatened Lord Fayne. Well! Do not be too ready to draw any conclusions from that. Lord Fayne was quite calm, and took no notice whatever of the man's threats. A painful scene ensued, and Lord Fayne almost immediately left the house. I have no doubt, in my own mind, that he left the place and went quite away—probably to London. I feel sure that he did not see Ralph Forster again. I am perfectly convinced—of course I am—that Lord Fayne is as innocent of this crime as—I am!"

He made the assertion boldly, his head thrown back, a slight flush on his face.

Mr. Jones glanced at him for a moment, then dropped his eyes again.

"Your theory is, sir," he said, "that Lord Fayne went off, probably with the young woman?"

"Just so," said Stannard.

The inspector stood for a moment, with an inscrutable countenance.

"I will go down into the village, my lord," he said. "One of my men may have found some clue to this time. I may want a warrant against someone. Shall I find your lordship at home, or shall I go to one of the other magistrates?"

"Come to me," said the Earl, hoarsely. "I will remain at home."

Mr. Jones went straight down to White Cot, and, entering by the servants' hall, found Soames, the butler. Mr. Soames and he had some slight acquaintance, and Mr. Jones at once glided into the all-absorbing topic, over a glass of the dry sherry for which White Cot was famous. He did not seem at all inquisitive, but discussed the matter in quite an ordinary way. But Mr. Soames was, not unnaturally, excited, and gave a graphic description of the scene which he had witnessed from the garden.

"I said to myself, Mr. Jones," he remarked, with a solemn shake of the head, "that we hadn't heard the last of the business. Poor Forster was just like a madman. He was as white as that table cloth, and his eyes blazed like coals. It was only the g r that kept him from going for Lord Fayne."

"Ah!" said Mr. Jones. "There's always the deuce to pay when a woman is in the case. And so you say that Lord Fayne walked off with the gun?"

"Well, I didn't say so," said Mr. Soames. "But I recollect, now, that he did. I saw him distinctly as I stood at the door leading to the servants' hall here, and I think Mary, the second housemaid, saw him, too. Anyway, she heard him and Ralph and the girl talking together in the shrubbery. Didn't you, Mary?" he asked of a servant, who stood by, listening with open mouth and eyes.

"Yes," she said, eager to take part in the conversation. "Ralph Forster was going on just as he went on in the library. I couldn't hear everything he said, but I did hear the word murder, and I was so frightened I persuaded Mr. Soames to come in and shut the door."

Mr. Jones had got all he wanted. He finished his sherry, went outside, and, taking off his peaked cap, wiped his brow, though the day was anything but a warm one.

He was in a terrible fix. He was as certain in his own mind, that Lord Fayne was the murderer of Ralph Forster as that he, Jones, stood looking towards the Court. But to ask the great Earl of Averleigh for a warrant against his own son was a task which overwhelmed him. Detectives are not often the possessors of sympathetic natures, and Mr. Jones was generally as hard as nails, as he would have put it; but the remembrance of the old nobleman, broken down by grief, sat like a nightmare upon the inspector's chest. But his sense of duty was too keen to permit to hesitate long, and, with a shake like that of a Newfoundland coming out of an unpleasantly cold bath, he went back to the Court, was shown into the library, where the Earl and Stannard were still sitting, and with a grimness which only partially concealed his emotion, in set terms demanded his warrant.

"I'm very sorry, my lord!" he said.

The Earl held up his hand, as he wrote the document.

"You are but doing your duty, Mr. Jones," he said, "as I—God help me!—must do mine! Although the evidence against my unhappy son appears so damning I do not believe that he is guilty." He raised his head, and looked, with sorrowful dignity, straight before him.

Stannard started slightly, but made taste to say—

"Guilty! It is impossible! It is too absurd to suspect him!"

"No," said the Earl. "There is cause for suspicion, but I do not believe that he is guilty. The man who committed this murder was a coward. Not satisfied with thrusting the fellow over the edge of the quarry, he must have followed and shot him as he lay helpless and unable to defend himself. My son——" He paused, for the door had opened, and Lady Janet and Eva stood just within the room. They had been unable to bear the suspense any longer. Lady had Lady Janet's hand clasped in hers.

"Edmund," said Lady Janet, in a terrified voice, "I cannot bear it any longer! The servants were talking—I have heard dreadful words. What is it?"

The Earl looked at her as if he scarcely saw or heard her.

"It is useless to attempt to conceal the truth from you," he said. "Ralph Forster—the man who was at White Cot last night—has been murdered." Lady Janet clung to Eva. "There is worse to come," said the Earl.

"You must try and bear it, as I am trying. Heriot is suspected of the murder. The evidence against him is so strong that I have felt it my duty to issue a warrant for his arrest——"

A faint cry rose from Eva, not from Lady Janet, who was incapable of uttering a sound.

"It is not true!" she said. "He did not do it!"

Stannard hurried to her side; but, somehow, he dared not touch her, and stood irresolute, biting his lips. The Earl looked at her with sudden gratitude, though he did not guess at the reason which had prompted her assertion.

"No," he said. "He is not guilty. With all his faults, with all his vices, he is not a coward. He would not strike a man excepting in fair fight. I remember him as a boy, and never has he shown the slightest meanness. He was wild and reckless, but he was never a cur, such as the man who committed this deed must be!"

Eva crossed the room, as if she did not know what she were doing, and put her hand upon his shoulder.

"That is true!" she said. "That is true!" Her voice broke with a sob, and she hid her face upon his breast.

The Earl put his arm round her; his eyes filled with tears. Her defence of his erring son, the avowal of her belief in his innocence, broke down all his stoical composure.

"God bless you, my dear!" he exclaimed, in a low, broken voice. "It is kind of you to say so, and, though you do not know him, you are quite right to believe him innocent. He is bad and worthless, but he is not so utterly vile and mean as to have done this thing."

Still holding and soothing her, his thin, trembling hands upon her bent head, he addressed the inspector.

"You will find my son, Lord Fayne, very quickly, I have little doubt. When you have arrested him, tell him that I, his father, believe him to be innocent, and that I will take all necessary measures for his defence. Ask him to tell you where he was and what he did after he left my presence last night." He drew himself up to his full height, and looked gravely at the inspector. "He will tell you the truth. Yes, I do not think that, bad as he is, he would lie to save his life!"

Mr. Jones inclined his head.

"I shall do so, my lord," he said, in a low voice, and he left the room.

Stannard had spent some very trying moments. He was no whiter than the rest, but there was a peculiar expression in his eyes which must have startled them if they had not been too absorbed to notice him.

The Earl's declaration of Heriot's innocence; his designation of the murderer as a coward and a cur, had cut on even Stannard's callous conscience like a lash of a whip. For one brief instant, as the old man's clear tones rang like a bell through the room, Stannard had caught a glimpse of himself from which even he mentally recoiled. He stood biting the inside of his nether lip stealthily, unable to move, unable to speak, and watching Eva from the corners of his eyes. The Earl was the first to break the silence.

"Hush! Hush, my dear!" he said, gently and soothingly, to Eva, who was crying noiselessly on his breast. "I am grieved that the shadow of this terrible calamity should fall upon your bright young life. God knows we would have kept it from you if we could have done, so but that was impossible. Thank you, once more, my dear, for the words you utttered just now. Though I know they were only the expression of sympathy for a broken-hearted old man, I value them as dearly as if they had been prompted by the absolute knowledge of my son's innocence. Go now with Janet, my child, and leave me to face my great trouble alone."

She and Lady Janet passed out, and the earl sank into his chair.

Stannard moistened his lips. "We must consider what is to be done, sir," he began.

The Earl looked up with a rapt and absorbed expression on his haggard face.

"Yes," he said. "Not ing can be done until Heriot is found. There will be no difficulty. He will give himself up the instant he hears that this charge has been made against him. You will go to the authorities and increase the reward I offered to that of one thousand pounds. I must write to Heriot to night. No; there'll be no difficulty in finding him."

This is exactly what Mr. Jones had thought, but before many hours had passed he had reason to believe that he had been too confident. After he had left the Court he had started all the intricate and elaborate machinery which is now employed by the Law when it is in the pursuit of a criminal flying from justice.

He wired an accurate description of Heriot Fayne to Scotland Yard; detectives were set on the watch at all the termini; the ports, from which the great ocean liners take their departure, were as closely watched, and the ports of arrival on the continents of America and Europe were planted with skilled detectives, ready to arrest Heriot Fayne the moment he should disembark.

Mr. Jones, while making his inquiries and following up the case at Averleigh, expected every hour the significant telegram, "G. H ; O. K." which means, "Got him; all right!" But the telegram did not arrive, and on the following afternoon Mr. Jones took the train for London, muttering, "Wish I'd gone for the girl at first! It's always the best plan, after all."

He was going after Grace.

CHAPTER XXIX.

GRACE and Johnnie were sitting in her room. They had just returned from performing at a fashionable afternoon "At Home." Johnnie had played even better than usual, and there had been a pathos in Grace's simple songs which had touched even the limp and languid audience of which such gatherings always consist.

Since her return from Averleigh, Grace had been very sad and very subdued indeed. Her parting with Heriot was likely to leave a mark on her nature which no time of prosperity could efface. She had not told Johnnie where she had been or what had occurred, and, with that delicacy which distinguished him, and which belongs to all artistic natures, he had refrained from asking any questions; but though he could not see her face, he could hear her voice, and he knew that something had happened to sadden her.

Grace had made the tea, and they were sitting down to it, and discussing the success they had achieved at the "At Home," when there came a knock at the door, and Mr. Jones entered.

"How do you do, Miss Warner?" he said, in his gentlest and blandest voice. "I am afraid I am intruding. Don't be alarmed," for Grace had risen, and was regarding him with nervous surprise. "I am only come on a little matter of business. May I sit down?"

Grace gave him a chair, and he drew it to the table, in the friendliest way.

"If you were to offer me a cup of tea now, Miss Warner," he said, "upon my word, I shouldn't refuse, for I have come all the way from Averleigh——"

Grace started, and repeated the word, and the color flew to her face.

Mr. Jones noticed her agitation, though he did not appear to do so.

"Yes," he said; "I am Inspector Jones, of Newton, you know; and I dare say you can guess what I've come about."

Grace shook her head.

"No? Of course, you've heard what has happened there?"

"No," said Grace, in a low voice.

"Oh, come! You must have seen it in the papers," said Mr. Jones. "It's in all the contents bills, and the newspaper boys must have shouted it about the streets."

"I never see a paper," said Grace. "I have not heard anything. What is it?"

Mr. Jones looked at her first with incredulity; but something in the fair, childlike face made him feel ashamed of his suspicions.

"Well, I've got to tell you," he said, gravely. "A dreadful murder has been committed at Averleigh——"

Grace uttered a cry, and rose from her seat, her hand pressed to her heart.

"Lord Heriot?" she exclaimed.

Mr. Jones nodded, significantly.

"No," he said. "It is not Lord Fayne who was murdered, but another man. Can you not guess the poor fellow's name? It is Ralph Forster!"

Grace sank into her chair, and covered her face with her hands. Mr. Jones watched her closely.

"Yes," he said. "He was found murdered the morning you left Averleigh. He was thrown over the quarry and shot, the night you went to White Cot."

"Oh! who—who could have done it?" she moaned.

"Ah! that's what we are trying to find out. But I'm afraid there can't be very much doubt about it. I'm afraid you can't have very much doubt."

Grace looked at him in a stupor of grief. "Who?" she whispered.

Mr. Jones leaned over the table.

"Lord Fayne!" he said, in a corresponding whisper.

Grace looked at him with a wild horror for a moment; then the blood rushed to her face again, and in a burst of indignation she exclaimed, not loudly, but in a voice as clear as a bell—

"It's a lie!"

Mr. Jones leant back in his chair, if the truth must be told, somewhat staggered. He had expected her to show, by tears and terror, her knowledge of the crime and the criminal; but her steadfast eyes, the eloquent ring of truth in her voice, "gave him pause," as Hamlet says.

"You don't believe it!" he said.

"Believe it!" echoed Grace. Then she turned to Johnnie.

"Johnnie, they say that Mr. Dick has committed murder!"

Johnnie turned his sightless eyes from one to the other; then he laughed—actually laughed.

"That's nonsense," he said, in his thin treble. "He couldn't do it!"

Mr. Jones was more staggered than before.

"Look here, Miss Warner," he said; "I've come here to get your evidence. I might have coaxed it out of you without telling you anything; but that's not my way. You've got to tell me everything you know, painful as it may be to you; and, just to show you how useless it would be for you, my dear, to keep anything back, I'll tell you, in six words, the case against Lord Fayne, and you'll see that the jury had good grounds for returning a verdict of wilful murder against him!"

Grace's lips formed, rather than repeated the dreadful words: "Wilful murder!"

Mr. Jones related, with perfect honesty, the incidents of the crime. Grace listening, with white face and horrified eyes.

"You see," he said, "Lord Fayne admitted that he was your"—he hesitated—"your lover. He, unfortunately, meets your other lover, poor Forster; there is a

painful scene at White Cot; Lord Fayne is seen going from White Cot with a gun in his hand; he is heard to threaten Ralph Forster; Forster is found dead in the quarry shot, with the gun Lord Fayne carried lying beside him. There can be no doubt of the connection of the gun with Lord Fayne, for he had been seen in Newton with it that morning.

'Lord Fayne is known to be a man of wild and reckless character. All London is acquainted with his career. He has been up before the magistrates on a charge of assault quite lately; he had a fight with a miner on the very morning of the murder. What more probable that he and Ralph Forster met each other on the lonely moor that night, and that, in a fit of passion, Lord Fayne killed his jealous rival?"

Grace leant back in her chair, breathing heavily and painfully.

It all seemed so terribly black! And yet she knew, in her heart, that Lord Fayne was innocent.

"But," continued Mr. Jones, with solemn emphasis, "the most damning piece of evidence consists in the fact that Lord Fayne has taken flight. He disappeared immediately after the murder, and has not been found."

Grace remained silent. She had not yet realized the whole of the awful business.

"Now," said Mr. Jones, "of course, Lord Fayne left Averleigh with you, Miss Warner. I want you, for your own sake, to tell me all that you know about him and his disappearance. It can't make it worse for him, because there is already enough evidence to——"

He stopped before the dreadful words, "hang him."

"Lord Fayne did not leave Averleigh with me," said Grace.

"Is that the truth?" asked Mr. Jones. "Miss Warner, I beg of you to conceal nothing. He must have left with you."

"He did not leave with me," said Grace. "I did not see him after——"

"After what?" asked Mr. Jones.

"After I parted from him on the moor that night."

"What time was that?"

"I do not know," said Grace, putting her hand to her head. "I could not tell; it was not very long after we left White Cot. It was——"

She stopped suddenly, for, as her bewildered brain endeavored to recall the incidents of that night in their proper sequence, there flashed upon her the remembrance of the firing of a gun which she had heard while she had been talking to Heriot. She rose from her chair, and, looking steadily into Mr. Jones' eyes, said, breathlessly—

"You—say—that—he—was shot?"

Mr. Jones nodded, watching her like a lynx.

"Then he did not do it," she said; "he did not do it! I know it! I know it! Oh, thank God!"

Mr. Jones was staggered again. In his own mind he had no doubt whatever of Lord Fayne's guilt. As he had said, the evidence seemed altogether conclusive. But Grace's face, the tone of her voice, as she announced Lord Fayne's innocence, amazed and startled him. He looked at her with grave intensity; then he said, sternly—

"If Lord Fayne did not murder Ralph Forster, who did?"

Grace looked from side to side, like a hunted hare.

"I don't know," she said. "My head's in a whirl. I cannot think. But he did not do it. He could not, as Johnnie says."

There was a pause. Then Mr. Jones said, very quietly—

"You are keeping something from me, Miss Warner. I can quite understand your belief in Lord Fayne. A woman is quite right in believing in the man she loves——"

Grace's white face grew crimson, then as suddenly went pale again.

Mr. Jones nodded.

"You will not deny that Lord Fayne was your lover," he said. "I am sorry to have to speak so plainly and give you pain——"

"Lord Fayne was never a lover of mine," said Grace, almost inaudibly. "He never cared for me. I was never anything to him——"

The accents, her face, bore the impress of truth. Mr. Jones gazed at her in astonishment.

"Come," he said. "Tell me all you know about this business."

Grace looked at him steadily, and into her pretty face came that expression of firmness and decision which Heriot Fayne had noticed. Her lips closed tightly; then she said, in a low, steady voice—

"I will tell you nothing. I have promised, and I will keep my promise."

"Promised whom?"

"Lord Fayne," said Grace. "When he tells me that I may speak, I will speak, but not till then."

Mr. Jones looked at her attentively.

"And yet," he said, quietly, "what you might say might save Lord Fayne's life. At present every tittle of evidence is against him. He will be caught——"

"You have not caught him yet!" said Grace. "When he comes back—and he will come back and face all this—he may give me leave to speak, until then I shall say nothing; and"—she added, with a touch of true femininity—"no one shall make me."

Mr. Jones rose.

"You'd better come back with me to Averleigh," he said, gravely.

"You mean that you are going to take me in charge," said Grace, but without any kind of consternation.

"No, no," said Mr. Jones, with a slight smile. "Though I tell you frankly, Miss Warner, that I should be fully justified in doing so, for I believe that you know a great deal about this murder; but I don't think it's necessary to take you into custody. All the same I've got to keep my eye upon you—you understand that, of course—and I can do it easier down there than in London, where you might—er—well, give me the slip, and some trouble."

"I will come," said Grace.

"And me too," said Johnnie. "I won't leave Grace; we've got money put by——"

"Oh, money's all right," said Mr. Jones. "You shan't lose by it. We'll start to-morrow. You'll give me your word that you won't bolt after Lord Fayne to-night?"

"No," said Grace, very quietly. "I can promise that, because I do not know where he is. If I did I would go to him, or send to him and tell him what is being said of him; and he would come back like the wind."

"Then I wish you did know where he is," said Mr. Jones, with profound sincerity.

Grace was silent for a moment.

"I—I want to ask a question," she said.

"Ask away," said Mr. Jones. "It's only fair. I've asked you plenty."

The color rose faintly to her face.

"Does—does Miss Winsdale believe that he is guilty?" she asked, almost inaudibly.

"No!" he replied. "Both Miss Winsdale and the earl believe him to be innocent, and say so pretty stoutly."

Grace said nothing. Mr. Jones waited for a moment or two.

"I'll be here for you at half-past ten, to-morrow," he said; "till then, good-bye. If you should change your mind between now and then, Miss Warner——"

Grace shook her head.

"I shall not change my mind," she said.

Mr. Jones looked at her with his head on one side, just as a naturalist might study some extremely interesting specimen, then shook hands with her, patted Johnnie softly on the head, and took his departure. When he got down into the grimy street he stood and stared at the pavement in a contemplative fashion, which afforded unbounded amusement to several urchins, who jeeringly declared in the words of the ever popular song, "Ee don't know where 'e are!" And never was a quotation more applicable.

For the first time Mr. Jones began to feel that he did not know where he was. Until to-night, notwithstanding the Earl's and Miss Winsdale's belief in Lord Fayne's innocence, Mr. Jones had never had any doubt of his guilt; but his interview with Grace Warner had shaken him to an extraordinary degree.

It was not what Grace had said, as what she had not said, that had impressed him. He had expected to find her overwhelmed with fear; had expected her to sob out her confession of her share in, or knowledge of, the crime; in short, he had hoped to have been able to forge the last link in the chain of evidence against Lord Fayne by Grace's aid. But somehow, for the first time, he began to feel the shadow of a doubt of Lord Fayne's guilt. He believed every word that Grace had said. He was an experienced detective, and prided himself on being able to detect a lie, even when it was uttered by the most plausible liar, and he felt convinced that whatever else she might be, Grace was not that.

The pretty, gentle face; the sweet and simple voice, had affected him to an astonishing extent.

"I wish," he said to himself, as he walked on, still staring at the pavement, "that I'd followed the ordinary course, and gone for Grace Warner first; but I felt so sure of getting hold of Lord Fayne in an hour or two. Innocent! The Earl says he is innocent, Miss Winsdale says he is innocent, and, what carries more weight with me, this girl swears he's innocent. Very well, then, why the devil did he make a bolt for it? And, if he didn't murder Ralph Forster, who did? That's the problem; and I've got to find it out. And, by the living jingo, I will!"

CHAPTER XXX.

MR. JONES took Grace and Johnnie back with him to Averleigh, and placed them in the charge of the Warners. He was very friendly all the way down, and did not once refer to the murder; in fact he was so friendly and pleasant that Grace almost—but not quite—forgot the terrible business in which he was engaged.

Her ideas of a detective had been gleaned from the pages of sundry highly-colored novels, and Mr. Jones was quite unlike any of the gentry therein depicted. There was nothing mysterious or uncanny about him; he did not walk on tiptoe, or look from side to side out of the corners of his eyes, but, indeed, behaved just like an ordinary and very agreeable person.

He bought a thick rug for Grace and Johnnie, a goodly supply of magazines and illustrated periodicals, and half-way down produced from under the seat a picnic basket, which, if it did not contain quite as luxurious fare as that which Coster Dick had purchased for the never-to-be-forgotten supper, held a very nice little lunch, of which he persuaded Grace and Johnnie to partake.

"It's no use being more unhappy than you can help, Miss Warner," he remarked cheerfully and very sensibly. "Going without food won't bring poor Forster back to life, or help us to discover the man who killed him. I'm sure you and Johnnie will be glad to leave London for a little while; a change won't do either of you any harm, and, besides, you'll both of you be all the better for a little rest."

He continued to make himself pleasant, and was so attentive to Grace as if she had been a princess instead of virtually his prisoner. She grew very tired before they reached Averleigh, and Mr. Jones extemporised quite a comfortable couch, and insisted upon her lying down, covering her very snugly with the rug; and he and Johnnie talked in whispers while she slept.

He was just as pleasant when he took them to the cottage.

"I've brought your daughter and her young friend to stay with you for a little while, Mrs. Warner," he said.

"This business has quite upset her, of course; and she's much better down here with you than fretting her heart out alone in that dreary London. And, look here, if I were you I wouldn't talk about this affair more than I could help," and he smiled genially round at them. "Miss Grace made up her mind that she won't say anything about it until Lord Fayne is arrested—comes back and I'm not going to press her. In fact, I'm not going to worry her in any way, and if you'll let me drop in now and again in a friendly way, I'll promise not to say a word about it."

He shook hands in the friendliest manner, and then went off to the Court to report progress. On his way he thought a great deal of Grace, in fact, a great deal more of Grace than the case.

He was shown into the library at the Court, and the Earl and Stannard Marshbank presently came to him. Both men looked grave and sad, of course, but of the two Stannard Marshbank appeared to be the most careworn and anxious. In fact, Mr. Jones was rather startled by a certain change in him.

"I'm afraid you've not been well, Mr. Marshbank?" he said.

Stannard colored slightly, and a swift frown of annoyance passed over his face.

"Thank you," he said coldly. "I am very well, but I—we are all—in great trouble over this business. Have you found my cousin, Lord Fayne?"

"No," said Mr. Jones, "I'm sorry that I have not. It's the most mysterious case of disappearance that has ever come under my notice. The fugitive generally leaves some slight clue behind him, but Lord Fayne has got off—I beg your pardon, my lord, I don't mean the word in an offensive sense without leaving a trace behind him to help us. I can't even make up my mind whether he has left the country or not; I did think that I should be able to get an inkling as to his whereabouts from the young person who was down here that night. I mean Miss Warner, but I'm quite convinced that, though she knows something about the murder, she does not know where Lord Fayne is."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

BIRDS MIGRATION.—Some idea of the great power underlying the impulse of birds to migrate may be gained when it is mentioned that swallows have been known to perish rather than forsake their young in a fire, yet they will leave their second callow brood in obedience to this mysteri instinct.

FOXES.—Foxes, those unwelcome visitors to farm-yards, are said to repay the farmers some portion of their keep by destroying immense numbers of field-mice. No one gives them any credit for this useful service, but it means an immense saving to the agriculturists.

WRITING.—The earliest Greek inscriptions were written from right to left. Next came the method called "boustrophedon," in which the written lines run alternately from right to left and from left to right, or vice-versa. Lastly, writing from left to right became universal.

THE COREAN HAT.—A singular Corean hat is a great round mat of straw worn by a mourner. The hat is bound down at the sides so as almost to conceal the head and face of the wearer. He carries in his hand a screen or fan, and when in the road any one approaches him, he holds the screen in front of him, so that it, together with the hat, completely conceals him.

CANTON STREETS.—The streets of Canton are divided into sections of a few blocks each; and each section is shut off from all others by heavy gates, which are closed at nine o'clock in the evening. The populace is so turbulent that for many centuries the authorities have made it a practice to hold all the people of any section responsible for any riot or tumult in that section. The result is that people have got into the habit of regulating affairs in their section without any reference to the powers that be.

LETTER LOCKS.—The puzzle or letter-lock is one of the oldest in Europe, and attracted much attention two centuries ago. It is generally in the form of a padlock, opened and closed without a key of steel or iron, but by a mental one hidden away in the recesses of the memory of the person who closed it, the law of permutations contributing to the security. Some of these very curious contrivances consisted of broad steel rings, four, five, or eight deep, upon each of which the alphabet was engraved. These turned on a cylinder of steel, and separated only where the letters forming a particular word were in a straight line with one another. The word was selected from among a thousand, and the choice was the secret of the purchaser. Any one not knowing the word might turn the rings for years without finding the right one.

PIONEER LIFE IN CALIFORNIA.—The bill of fare in the mines was not luxurious. The staples were beans, bread, rice, bacon, salt pork, dried apples, coffee, sugar, and occasionally fresh meat. Fresh fruit, milk, butter and eggs could not be had at any price. Dried apples protected the miners from the scurvy. Domestic life was simple. The general rule was that the wood chopping, fire making, water carrying and other kinds of household work should be divided around and each have an equal share. The cabins were left unguarded and unlocked. Every one washed his own clothes. The underclothing was of coarse cotton or wool, and hid the dirt easily and was easily washed. Sunday was a day of rest from labor. The pious spent it in reading, writing letters, conversation and walking; the worldly went out prospecting and hunting.

ANCIENT MUSIC.—The Egyptian flute was only a cow's horn with three or four holes in it, and their harp or lyre had only three strings. The Grecian lyre had only seven strings, and was very small, being held in one hand. The Jewish trumpets that made the walls of Jericho fall down were only rams' horns; their flute was the same as the Egyptian, they had no other instrumental music but by percussion, of which the greatest boast made was of the psaltery, a small triangular harp or lyra with wire strings, and struck with an iron needle or stick; their sackbut was something like a bagpipe; the timbrel was a tambourine, and the dulcimer was a horizontal harp, with wire strings, and struck with a stick like the psaltery. They had no written music, and scarcely a vowel in their language, and yet, according to Josephus, had to be satisfied that said musicians playing at the dedication of the Temple of Solomon. Listening to such a concert, Mozart would doubtless have died in the greatest of agonies.

A WITHERED ROSE.

BY M. ROCK.

'Tis only a faded rose, my dear,
With its petals dry and dead;
Since its birth in a fragrant country lane
Some thirty years have fled.
Thirty years, my dear, of sorrow and care
Have passed since it lay in my glossy hair.

The sky was never so blue, my dear,
As it was that Summer day;
And never before did the daisies shine
As they did in the meadow way,
When a hand, long dust in the churchyard mould,
Placed that poor dead rose in my curls of gold.

My journey is nearly done, my dear,
The shadows are falling fast,
And the old, old pain will pass, my dear,
Away from my heart at last,
When I meet my lover no more to part,
When that dead rose lies on a silent heart!

LOVE THE VICTOR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A FATAL MOMENT," "A RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION," "WRECKED," "THE FRUITS OF A CRIME," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.—(CONTINUED.)

MAGDALEN ORMOND was resting on a pile of cushions in the corner of a couch. The roses in her dark hair might have been selected purposely to match the rich color that suffused her cheeks as Mr. Flackton appeared in the doorway and advanced towards her.

"I thought you were never coming!" Magdalen began reproachfully, giving him a bewitchingly soft glance from beneath her thick lashes. "Have the walnuts and the wine so many more attractions than we poor women?"

"Noblesse oblige. You can apply the words to the circumstances," returned Stephen, leaning on the chimney piece and looking down at her with apparent admiration.

"'Men are deceivers ever!' Perhaps you can apply that," she retorted gaily. "However I don't want to search too deeply, or put you into the palace of Truth. I would rather try to believe you infinitely prefer my society to the prosy masculine gossip you have been enduring, only that a lofty sense of duty and self sacrifice to custom compel you to put off the pleasure until the last moment!"

"We business men are used to putting duty first," replied Mr. Flackton.

"And given to self-sacrifice, of course," she re orted. "Well, I candidly confess I like to please myself and let duty and self sacrifice do as they can."

"The very words sound out of place from those rosy lips."

Miss Ormond was not acute enough to detect the satire in Stephen's tones. He was actually complimenting her, so she must be gaining ground.

"I was never one of those strong-minded women who endeavor to set the Thames on fire. I am one of the poor-spirited creatures who own the masculine sway, and recognize man's superiority."

Stephen was as vain as most men undoubtedly are, and he smiled down at the handsome girl approvingly.

"Those are the right kind of women, in my estimation. I hate above all things to hear a hen trying to crow. It's a wretched performance at best."

"What do you consider a woman's proper sphere?" asked Magdalen, looking up at him as at a god, and yet seemingly eager for instruction.

"Home!" replied Stephen emphatically. "A woman should know how to adorn and order her own special province of home. She should reverence her husband, never disputing his will herself nor allowing anyone else to do so. She should never trouble him with any of her little troubles, but always be ready to sympathize with his. I would have a woman know enough to sympathize with her husband, but not sufficient to domineer over him."

Stephen paused abruptly, conscious that he was allowing the subject to run away with him.

"It is my ambition to be such a woman!" murmured Magdalen very gently, meeting his eyes wistfully.

"A very noble ambition," he returned warmly.

"And—and your ideal woman should be beautiful—should she not?" asked the girl, blushing consciously, and lifting her roses to her face with pretty confusion.

"Certainly—I have a prejudice against plain women. Yes—she should be beautiful, gentle, but with a dash of spirit, and——"

"What else?" inquired Magdalen curiously, as he paused.

"Good," he answered gravely.

Miss Ormond stifled the laugh that rose to her lips. It was such an odd finale, she thought.

"Ah, yes—good of course!" she agreed. "But where will you find your paragon, Mr. Flackton?"

Before Stephen's vision gleamed a pallid ethereal face as seen in the gloom of an antique porch, the fair hair surrounding it like a saintly nimbus, the large dark eyes lustrous with tears.

"Perhaps I have found her," he observed significantly. "Who knows?"

Again Miss Ormond blushed. Her heart throbbed quickly, and she turned with a sensation of relief from his keen gaze at the sound of Mrs. Conway's voice.

"Will you sing to us, Miss Ormond?" asked the old lady.

"'Magdalen' will sing if you wish," replied the girl, with playful reproach. "Dear Mrs. Conway, you know you promised to call me Magdalen!"

"So I did, my dear," admitted Stephen's mother, as she touched the gir 's flushed cheek caressingly. "'Tis a pretty name—don't you think so, Stephen?"

"Very pretty," he agreed.

There was a quick triumphant gleam in Miss Ormond's eyes. Had she secured him?

"What shall I sing?" Magdalen asked Mrs. Conway, rising as she spoke and taking the thin hand that had stroked her face in both her own. "You shall choose."

"Nay—Stephen had better do that, my dear. All the songs I know by name are terribly behind the age."

"Well, Mr. Flackton, then?"—turning to him with a charming gesture of submission.

"Your music is lying on the piano, I believe," he replied; "let us go and look at it! I am in a mood for something sentimental to night."

More than one pair of eyes followed the two tall graceful figures as he led Magdalen to the Erard which stood at one end of the long room.

Lady Ormond paused in her flirtation with the effeminate-looking Plantagenet to smile approvingly.

"They are well matched!" she exclaimed involuntarily.

"Ah," returned her cavalier, opening his eyes, "that's how the land lies! Then now, my beautiful Lettice, you cannot plead your daughter as an obstacle to our union any longer. When may I claim you as my own? You have kept me in torment long e ough to satisfy even your cruelty."

Lady Ormond glanced quickly round. They were quite unobserved. She slipped her hand into Mr. Stonewarren's and pressed it slightly ere she withdrew it.

"When all is settled about Maggie, I will make you happy," she murmured.

"Ah, no, dearest, sweetest! You must be mine soon, in any case, or I will seek my grave——"

"Hush, you horrid man!" cried Lady Ormond, in affected terror. "Don't say such dreadful things! You know I love you, but wait till to-morrow—only until tomorrow—and whether or not my foolish child has secured her future I will punish you no longer."

"He's done for—poor old Steve!" Lionel Grey thought, as he sipped his tea behind Mrs. Macfarren's chair and watched his friend turning over the leaves of Magdalen's music with assiduity if not with regularity. "His choice can hardly make much difference to me, still I feel as if that were not the girl for Steve. He might be made a good man of by a good woman, but I don't think Miss Ormond is that."

* * * * * *

"I do think, Maggie, you made an impression last night," remarked Lady Ormond the next morning, when mother and daughter were idling over their late breakfast in dressing-gowns whose untidiness would have horrified Stephen Flackton. "I never saw your iceberg thaw so much before."

"He is an iceberg," sighed Magdalen dolorously—"but somehow, mother, it, only makes me love him more; and I really think he likes me a little better than he did."

"Yes," replied Lady Ormond, concealing her disappointment, for she had hoped for something more decided than this—"I firmly believe you will win. I saw it in his face last night. I wish you joy of your prize, my dear. And I have a little news of my own for you, Magdalen."

"Yes!" said Magdalen indifferently, the pleased conscious smile wherewith she had listened to her mother's first words still lingering on her lips.

"Yes," replied her ladyship sharply, annoyed by her daughter's unconcern. "I too love and am beloved. I have secured a prize in the matrimonial lottery."

Magdalen was roused in earnest now. She turned quickly and started at her mother.

"You! You, mother? You love some one? You are surely joking!"

"Not at all. You forget that I appear so little older than yourself as to be frequently mistaken for your elder sister. People are kind enough to tell me that I am attractive and eligible yet. One who is worthy in all respects of my love has sought and found it."

"You do not mean," commenced Magdalen faintly.

"I mean Plantagenet Stonewarren, a gentleman of unblemished character and pedigree, nearly as wealthy as your cotton lord, and devoted to my unworthy self."

"You shall not do it, mother!" Miss Ormond cried angrily. "I won't enduro it!"

"Pardon me, my dear, you have no choice in the matter. But for my natural wish to see you settled first, I should have married long ago. And let me seriously warn you that you had better make the most of your opportunities, for I shall not care to have a grown-up daughter dogging my steps everywhere when I am married, which will be in the course of a few months. No words, Magdalen, if you please"—rising to leave the apartment with as haughty a mien as she could assume—"they do not become your position. I allow you liberty to marry whom you will, and you—my daughter—can scarcely presume to interfere with my actions. I will leave you to grow calm. No doubt you are a little upset, but reflection will show you that the best, indeed the only course, is graceful submission on your part to the inevitable. I shall expect you therefore to treat Mr. Stonewarren with every respect and consideration."

Left alone, Magdalen gave way to angry tears and passionate exclamations of wrath and wounded pride, only quelled at length by exhaustion. But her grief would have been much keener if she had known that at that moment Stephen Flac ton was reading a letter imploring his immediate presence at a friend's house in the country, which invitation, without a thought regarding herself, he was preparing to accept.

"A little change will do me good, mother," he declared. "And I long for some shooting. I shall start to morrow morning."

"What about Miss Ormond?" his mother suggested, smiling at him.

"Oh, I shall not be away more than a week or two! I shall no doubt find her here all right on my return!" he answered, his fair face flushing.

CHAPTER VIII.

"YOU must wear one of your white dresses to-night, Miss Lyne," said Mrs. Denys, when her young companion had wrapped her up comfortably on the sofa in her bed room for her afternoon siesta and was herself about to depart for a ramble in the wood.

Agnes started and turned pale as she replied—

"White! Oh, I cannot!"

"But you must," returned her employer, speaking in a tone Agnes knew she could not likely disobey. "You need have no scruple about your being in mourning, for white—plain white—is recognized everywhere as such. You may wear your jet ornaments if you like. I don't wish to see you outshone by the Dacre girls and Mrs. Gelling. Now, run away! Just darken that farther blind a little, and mind you are back in time for your toilette. I shall be really angry if you do not look your loveliest to night."

Agnes Lyne sighed as she closed the door softly behind her, and went into the hall, where she found Glim awaiting her. She had fits of loneliness and heart-broken longings for her dear dead sister, and one was upon her now. Therefore the idea of leaving off, even for one night, the black draperies that seemed sowehow to her to be a consolation, was insupportable.

Tears dropped from her eyes as she opened the little wicket leading into the Weird Wood. Glim, looked up into her troubled face, licked her hand in mute sympathy, and Agnes patted Glim on the head. The dog was the only creature that loved her or cared for her, and- Heaven help her! —the only thing she loved.

"Oh, Glim," she cried, "I am so lonely, so unloved! I have no one in the wide, wide world to care for me. All for whom I had any affection have been taken from me, and I have been left. Oh, why was I allowed to remain? I wonder Heaven could be so cruel to a poor helpless, harmless girl!"

Agnes was slowly ascending a narrow winding path among the thick fir-trees. Their twisted roots extended everywhere; their leaves and hard brown cones lay thickly strewn on the white sandy soil. The air was laden with the scent of pines, and patches of bright wild autumn flowers showed gem-like here and there. The quietude was disturbed only by a faint fitful sighing as the wind stirred the fringes of the firs. The scene was indeed typical of peace although touched with melancholy.

Agnes Lyne had been domiciled a fortnight at Weirdwood Grange, a period that had seemed to her almost an age, so new and strange was everything to her. Mrs. Denys really seemed to have a liking for the girl; but the lady was capricious. Sometimes she treated her most kindly, even indulgently. She would address her as "my little girl," or "darling," or "lily-flower"—would praise her eyes, her complexion, or her sweet voice. At other times Mrs. Denys would treat Agnes coolly, and address her as "Miss Lyne." The girl never knew exactly what her mistress's moods would be; whether she would be gay or sunk in gloom—as she sometimes was—and the uncertainty was not pleasant.

Mr. Denys—for the little dark-faced woman had a lord and master—was a paralyzed invalid, having his own rooms and private attendants. He was wheeled out in a bath chair when the weather was propitious, at other times he occasionally appeared for a brief period in hall or drawing-room.

His mind was apparently unaffected by his dreadful visitation, save that it seemed oppressed by chronic melancholia. Agnes thought there was something very pathetic in the sad dreamy glance of his blue sunken eyes.

One day when he had been wheeled into the drawing-room where Agnes had been sitting alone, she went timidly up to Mr. Denys and asked if he would like her to read aloud to him. He had looked at her first in surprise, then with dawning interest, but whatever answer he would have given was interrupted by his wife's entrance.

"You here, Guy!" she remarked suspiciously.

Agnes blushed, she knew not why, and said—

"I was asking Mr. Denys if he would like me to read to him."

"Oh, dear no! He hates to be bothered You can read to me when you feel disposed," replied Mrs. Denys quickly; then, to her husband—"It's time you rested now, Guy."

"Thank you; my dear, for thinking of a lonely invalid," observed Mr. Denys, as Agnes turned away, feeling snubbed; and the simple words gave her some pleasure.

Her own life would have been happier if she could have done something to brighten his existence, but as yet there was no opening. Did not Miss Denys love her husband? she asked herself; and was it that even while he obeyed her wishes she yet seemed half afraid of him.

Miss Lyne had seen her shrink from a sudden flash of his sunken eyes—accompanied by a sudden sharply uttered "Remember!" The girl thought she should never be afraid of him; but she was not quite sure of her feeling for Mrs. Denys, who sometimes fascinated, sometimes repelled, but, generally speaking, bewildered her.

Agnes sometimes felt very lonely in the romantic old house, but she was gaining health and strength daily. Her wasted figure began to shew signs of filling out; her skin had lost its too delicate pallor, her eyes their lustreless languor, and the fresh air inspired her in spite of herself. The previous evening indeed she had unbent so far as to laugh at the jokes of a Mr. Charles Brander—a laugh which he had thought as sweet as a peal of silver bells, but which Agnes, a few minutes after, felt annoyed with herself for having allowed to escape.

Now, however, all things seemed dull to the girl. There was a weight on her heart as she wandered amongst the pines, totally oblivious of the departing sun-rays and the increasing gloom.

"How much happier I was, working in our poor little room with Minnie, than in all this grandeur!" she thought sadly. "Before Minnie was taken ill we were happy and content. But I shall never be happy again, for I can not have my darling back."

Burying her face in her hands, she sat

down upon a fallen trunk. The twilight gathered, the rising wind soughed dismally among the branches of the trees, while the moon rose like a ball of fire.

Suddenly Agnes was roused by a touch on her shoulder. Looking up with a start she beheld a small deformed woman by her side. The face looked wrinkled and aged, the long hair was gray, but in the eyes there was the fire of youth.

Agnes, although alarmed, had the presence of mind to call Glim to her before she asked—

"What do you want?"

"You're from the Grange. You're my lady's new companion, and I suppose you've never heard of wild Nance Suffolk? Well, you've done better than that, for you've seen me. What do I want? Why, to tell you your fortin', my pretty creatur. Nance can read the fortune, and tell everybody's fortin'. I can see yours in your eyes, maybe!"

The girl shivered involuntarily.

"I don't want to hear it, thank you," she said; "and it is late—I must return at once."

But the woman caught her hand and held it firmly. Agnes could not withdraw it. Becoming really frightened now, she looked round, but there was no one near. Glim was cowering at her feet, with his tail between his legs, and was evidently of no use as a protector.

She was just going to scream for help, when the woman threw her hand away with a contemptuous laugh.

"I thought 'twould ha' been something different from that!" she cried harshly. "Go yer ways! The horn has sounded twice while you've been fretting here, and the echoes walled an answer. They knew the meaning o' that sound. He has come, Agnes Lyne. Get you to meet him! 'Tis a right time for good lovers' trysts when the moon shows red and full. Fare you well!"—and laughing harshly, the witch-like figure dissappeared among the trees.

With the dog close beside her, Agnes sped down the narrow path, not daring to glance to right or left, where the fir trees looked so spectral in the twilight, and never paused till she reached the wicket, where, in her excitement, she had not seen a man in a brown coat, who was leaning on the topmost bar, leisurely smoking a cigar.

It was Mr. Brander, recruiting after the fatigues of the day.

"Miss Lyne!" he exclaimed, astonished at her sudden rush, which had nearly knocked his cigar from his hand, and wondering at the terror in her dilated eyes.

Relieved beyond measure by the mere presence of a human being, Agnes laughed aloud, half hysterically.

"I—I beg your pardon, Mr. Brander, but I have had such a fright; besides which, it is getting late!"

"Stop one moment to recover," he urged—"then we will walk on together. I grant you that it is dark, but it is not late. What fright have you had?"

Agnes, panting for breath, leaned against the wicket which he had closed. Presently she turned her bright flushed face towards him as she answered—

"I believe it was a poor harmless old woman, after all; but, oh, how she did frighten me.

"I would have frightened her if I had been there!" declared Mr. Brander, mentally sympathizing with Miss Lyne. "I don't think you ought to stray about in this old wood by yourself, you know. It isn't safe!"

"Please, don't say anything to Mrs. Denys!" implored Agnes. "I always have Glim with me, and I should be miserable if I were not allowed to roam about a little."

" 'For liberty is sweet'!" quoted Mr. Brander. "I would not for worlds breathe a hint against your desires. But won't you tell me what sort of creature it was you met in the woods there?"

They were sauntering leisurely through the garden now. Agnes' natural mistrust her coldness, her hauteur, all seemed to have deserted her. She forgot that the young man beside her, with whom she was now on such friendly terms, was one of the aristocratic guests who looked down upon persons occupying her position. She was just her simple self, roused by her late alarm from her previous sadness and apathy. Mr. Brander thought her altogether charming. He had admired her before, but had hitherto deemed it prudent to abstain from addressing her.

"She was a small deformed woman, with a peculiar grating voice," Miss Lyne continued. "She addressed me by my name, and wanted to tell me my fortune. She seized my hand, and would not let me go. It was then I felt so frightened."

"Poor child!" said Mr. Brander sympathetically. "And did she enlighten you as to your future destiny?"

"No—I suppose she thought it was not worth the telling. She only said——"

"What?" queried Mr. Brander, as Agnes paused in evident confusion.

"Oh, nothing particular—a lot of rubbish about the horn sounding, which I could not understand! I think that she wanted to frighten me, and she as nearly as possible succeeded! I was very silly!"

"That I am sure you were not! As for the horn sounding, I heard it twice. But there's nothing odd in that; it's a custom here when any one comes from the station. A special friend of Mrs. Denys' has arrived—a Mr. Flackton."

"Then that must have evidently inspired her nonsense," said Agnes. But all at once the girl exclaimed, "Ah, what was that?"

They both paused as if with one accord. Agnes instinctively held her breath. In the distance there was the perfectly distinct sound of a loud mocking laugh, echoed strangely in fainter peals from the hollow archway beneath the house. It was an uncanny sound. Mr. Brander looked round savagely, and would have rushed to the side of the garden whence it appeared to proceed, but Agnes clasped his arm impulsively.

"Oh, do not go! Do not leave me!" she exclaimed, shuddering.

The young man pressed her hand with a sudden tender impassioned clasp.

"No, no!" he replied soothingly. "But it is only some idle lout knocking about, who deserves a good thrashing for his impudence! Or perhaps the half-witted crone you spoke of—nothing more awful, you may be sure! You are rather unstrung, Miss Lyne; but you need not fear man or ghost while I am with you. You may safely trust yourself to my care."

Agnes heard him with a smile, and felt reassured by his words. She experienced a pleasant sense of being protected and cared for, which was new to her. She gave him a glance full of admiring gratitude, little dreaming of the effect of its power on him.

As for Mr. Brander, he retained her hand within his arm, and would have prolonged this delightful moonlight interview, with its spice of mystery and romance. But, on nearing the Grange, the clock struck six, warning Agnes that she must hurry in to dress.

"You are not frightened now?" asked Mr. Brander, pausing as they neared the entrance.

"No—not now!" Agnes replied, smiling at him.

"And we are friends henceforth?"

"Friends! I have no friends!" she murmured, the shadows of the past once more returning.

"Yes—from this moment!" exclaimed the young man, speaking low and hurriedly. "I have not much to recommend me, I know, Miss Lyne; but I can be a staunch friend. Will you allow me to be one? It would make me happy!"

Tears rushed to Agnes' eyes. How sweet to have a friend! she thought, too innocent to dream of danger in such a proceeding. She raised her eyes to his, and, speaking simply and unconsciously, she replied—

"And me too! I shall never be friendless again!"

"Never again!" he answered, raising her hand to his lips.

Then he opened the door for her, and she passed in to the warmth and light, running up-stairs with a smile on her lips and gratitude in her heart.

* * * * * * *

The drawing-room at Weirdwood Grange was a very quaint and pretty apartment. It had a vaulted ceiling, which was ornamented with clouds and cherub-heads, with a magnificently carved cornice that was the pride of the owner. Midway the room was arched, so that it was thus partially divided, heavy curtains of gold tapestry hanging on either side of the arch.

The only modern articles in the room were a grand piano and a few luxurious lounge-chairs. Mrs. Denys liked comfort above all things. The room terminated at one extremity in a conservatory, full of palms, ferns, and flowers. Sconces of exquisite Sevres and Dresden china stood on the antique inlaid cabinets and tables, and in the miniature recesses of the tall mantels. Big jars of rose-leaves and strange dried Indian leaves and flowers exhaled the same sweet but peculiar perfume Agnes had noticed in the corridor on the night of her arrival.

The room was brilliantly illuminated with two roaring fires—showing the quaint legends on the tiles to advantage—and that most lovely of all artificial lights—the glow of wax candles. It presents a wonderful contrast in its fire-lit warmth and luxury to the cold wild scene without.

So thought Stephen Flackton as he stood by one of the windows looking out. Always prompt in his actions, he had been the first to finish dressing, and found himself the solitary occupant of the drawing room, at liberty to beguile the time at his own sweet will. A peep into the outer world had for him the same attraction it has to most people similarly circumstanced.

To the right rose the precipitous mountain of Garfell in dense shadow. To the left lay the winding avenue, the strip of tall dewy grass, the hill side clothed in pines, weird and white in the moonlight which flooded the cloudless sky. Immediately beneath the window spread the still waters of the moat, whereon the reflection of the moon shone refulgently. At its edge the reeds stood out distinctly, bending their heads to the breeze that stirred them.

Stephen thought it strangely impressive. It reminded him of tales he used to read in his boyhood, before hard work and business cares had ousted all the latent romance from his mind.

Mr. Flackton was still indulging in his unaccustomed reverie, a half smile on his lips, when a slight noise aroused him.

He turned round, and there—like a picture framed by the hanging gold of the curtains that loosely fell from the archway, and trailed their long fringes on the ground—stood, hesitating, a young girl. She was dressed entirely in white, revealing a little of the dazzling fair neck and rounded arms. She looked spiritually pale and fair.

It was impossible, however altered, that Stephen should mistake that face. It had haunted him for months, but had begun to fade into the shadows of the past. He felt like one in a dream who has no power to move or speak, and had a vague troubled fancy that he gazed upon a vision which would vanish in a few moments.

As for Agnes Lyne a curious sense of recognition stirred her spirit, which was a mixture of pain and pleasure. With a feeling of inexplicable dread, yet with a subtle yearning towards him, she remained motionless. But Agnes felt that she had lived through this time before. Had she not met Stephen Flackton in this very place, this very room? It seemed to her that she had.

CHAPTER IX.

THERE was a rustle of silk and satin, a sound of feminine voices and low laughter, and Mrs. Denys entered the room with several of her guests.

Relieved from the strange mesmeric influence of each other's eyes, Stephen Flackton and Agnes Lyne recovered their presence of mind. The latter crossed the room to a distant seat, where she hoped to escape observation, while Stephen, his brain still dizzy, his pulses curiously stirred, advanced to meet his hostess.

"I have been admiring the view!" he explained awkwardly, following her toward the fireplace.

"Well, most strangers generally do so—and you, bad creature, are almost a stranger! I suppose there really is something to admire in the surrounding scenery; but then you see I live here!"—and Mrs. Denys shrugged her shoulders deprecatingly.

"Oh, but it is sweetly pretty!" declared Miss Coralie Dacre, opening her eyes wide to emphasize her admission. "You are quite naughty to talk so contemptuously about those charming woods and delightful mountains."

Mrs. Denys shrugged her shoulders again as she remarked.

"Miss Lyne's admiration makes up for my want of taste. She would live out of doors if I would let her. Where is she? Ah, my dear, come here, and be sociable for once!"

Mrs. Denys' tone was of the kindest. She smiled affectionate approval on the fair figure whose fashionably-made white robe caused Miss Dacre to open her eyes with astonishment. Was this impertinent girl—a mere hired companion—going to surpass her and her sisters—the eldest of whom, en passant, was already passee and dreadfully anxious to be settled? That should never be!

Shyly and reluctantly Agnes came forward, the most exquisite flush mantling her creamy cheek. Mrs. Denys put her arm round the girl's slim waist, the latter's cloudy draperies crushing against the brilliant ruby of Mrs. Denys' satin gown, Agnes' fair face and hair seeming more fair by contrast with the little woman's dark swallow skin and straight black locks.

Coralie Dacre drew disdainfully aside, remarking—

"Such a fuss about a companion! It is really indecent."

"Mr. Flackton, permit me to introduce to your notice the spirit of our Weird Wood," said Mrs. Denys playfully. "The Undine of our enchanted moat—in other words, Miss Agnes Lyne. Agnes, this is Mr. Flackton, one of my most esteemed friends."

An extraordinary thrill ran through Mr. Flackton's veins as Mrs. Denys thus rattled on, and he met for one moment the glance of those deep dark eyes. He bowed constrainedly to Agnes, but turned away to speak to Miss Coralie Dacre.

That young lady was delighted, for Mr. Flackton did not seem to approve of the Undine, and she at once followed up her advantage by entering into a lively discussion on the rival attractions of north and south country, wherein Rose and Belle, her elder sisters, joined.

Released by Mrs. Denys, Agnes was seized by Mrs. Gelling, who had taken a great fancy to the girl, and kept her on the lounge by her side until dinner was announced. Then, two by two, the people filed out. Bereft of her companion, Agnes was watching them dreamily, when some one said—

"You are my prize, Miss Lyne! May I have the pleasure?"—and there stood Mr. Brander, holding his arm for her acceptance, and smiling into her startled face.

"Were you thinking of Weird Wood again," he asked, as they were crossing the hall to their places at the table—"listening to the witch's animadversions?"

"Agnes blushed, then her face paled. What was the matter with her? she asked herself angrily. How was it that a stranger's looks should so discompose her? It must be that her nerves were still weak and unstrung.

"I believe you are frightened still," continued Mr. Brander half playfully, half earnestly. I really think I ought to get Mrs. Denys to forbid your wandering about alone."

"I think so too," chimed in Mrs. Gelling, who sat at the other side of the speaker, and overheard his last words. "Miss Lyne is far too handsome to be allowed to roam about the country."

"Nonsense! I beg your pardon, Mrs. Gelling, but really the country here is perfectly safe, and Glim is always with me. Besides, I have always been used to walk alone," Agnes explained.

"The spirit of the wood of course has her attendant fays. Besides, she bears a charm all potent to defend her," remarked Mr. Brander, who did not wish to vex Agnes, or have her vexed.

"What is that?" demanded Mrs. Gelling, smiling.

"Innocence," he answered gravely.

> "Bear a lily in thy hand,
> Gates of brass cannot withstand
> One touch of that magic wand!"

"A wild beast would not take much notice of that perhaps?" suggested Mrs. Gelling.

"You forget the legend respecting Una?" replied Mr. Brander; then, turning to Agnes, he said, in a lower tone, "I have been making inquiries about that old woman, Miss Lyne. I find she is well known in these parts, and lives in a log hut somewhere near Eidermine. For your comfort, she is quite harmless, and is not often seen in Weird Wood."

Although Agnes felt secretly relieved, she felt constrained to ask—

"I wonder how she came to know my name?"

"Oh, picked it up from one of the servants, no doubt! Unfortunately, nothing can be concealed from them; and they will gossip, you know. But, to change the subject, how is it you never join us at tennis? I have looked appealingly at you time after time, but never dared to ask you, being afraid that you would annihilate me with a glance."

"I never played tennis in my life."

"You don't say so? What an awful shame! But you dance?"

"No—I can't do anything of the sort. I am a perfect ignoramus, Mr. Brander. My life has been all work and no play, so far."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

As steady application to work is the healthiest training for every individual, so is it the best discipline of a state. Honorable industry always travels the same road with enjoyment and duty, and progress is altogether impossible without it.

SOUL TO SOUL.

BY W. R. W.

When the soul speaks to the soul,
Laugh not the joy to scorn;
When the heart sings to the heart,
The god of Love is born.
Life has fled from grief and care—
The world is full of joy;
Rich and poor alike do share—
Thanks, thanks to God on high!

When the soul speaks to the soul
In whispers soft and low;
When the heart cries to the heart,
There all life's wealth bestow.
Angels have no greater bliss,
Nor man a sweeter joy;
Oh, that men would love like this!
For here is no alloy.

Her Romance.

BY G. L. B.

"BUT what is it worth to you, Julian? That is, not as an occupation or amusement, but in money? Mere vulgar dross, you know, yet necessary in a world like ours. What is its marketable value?"

The speaker glanced round the small room in which he stood, with an eye that seemed to take each detail in turn, and check it off mentally. The fragments of illuminated borders and bits of diaper work; the bright colors hardly dry upon the palette; the book of gold leaf, with its attendant cushion, knife, and brush; and lastly, a strange seeming inconsistency with these mediæval appliances, an easel with a large painting upon it, the cover of which was partially drawn aside.

The old gentleman who had spoken, and who was rather out of his element, looked at the young occupant of the room and shuffled a little.

"I don't pretend to know anything about this nick-nackery," he continued; "but that now," indicating the easel with a significant nod, "has to me more the semblance of real work about it than the rest. A picture is a picture, and can be sold, I suppose; that is, if it's worth buying. Still, for all that, I must persist in my question—the marketable value of your productions, Julian?"

The young man thus addressed did not at once answer the question, but propounded one in his turn. He passed his hand, all stained with gold and crimson, across his forehead with a rapid, agitated movement, and turned towards his friend.

"You have something to say to me, sir," said he. "Why not tell it at once? You are not in the habit of troubling yourself about my occupations."

"Neither has it hitherto been necessary that you should consider the actual remunerative worth of your labor, Julian," he replied. "At least, I suppose it has not. You have looked upon yourself as your uncle's heir?"

"I have been taught to do so," said Julian.

The old gentleman emitted a dissatisfied sort of grunt. He had no intention of being harsh or supercilious; but his mind, the practical mind of a business man, saw in the contents of Julian's studio nothing but foolishness and trifling.

"You may so look upon yourself still, if you like," he said; "heir to nothing, I am sorry to say, unless it be debt. The firm has come to grief, my boy. Like many another time-honored name, it means nothing now. The greater the house, the greater the smash, always."

"And," said Julian, quickly, "my uncle?"

"Ah," said the old gentleman, "it's all right for you to think of him, to be sure, since you owe all to him. And his wee bit lammie of a daughter that is motherless—penniless, too, now, Julian. Yes, it's right you should think of him first—I'm glad you did. Just at this moment, however, I want your attention. Take time to consider, and then tell me if all this litter will ever be worth anything. I happen to be your godfather, you know; and although that's not much in the world's eyes, yet I confess to a sort of interest in your goings on."

The old gentleman stepped up to the easel, and rolled the cover quite back. He looked at the unfinished painting with his head on one side and tried to imagine that he was being critical and sharp. He knew nothing at all about pictures, or the terms of art criticism; and he expressed his opinion of a certain piece of foreshortening in a brief but emphatic sentence.

"The man's knee is too big for his foot," said he; and then he shook his head at it, and grunted again. He didn't think much of it, evidently. In spite of the suddenness and reality of the change which had passed over his future, the young painter could not suppress a smile, which the critic caught sight of. "Ah," said he, "you think I'm an old fool, of course; but then I suppose you're a genius. What's it about, this picture?"

"From the 'Ancient Mariner,'" replied Julian—

"Why look'st thou so? With my crossbow
I shot the albatross."

"Oh! poetry, is it?" said the old gentleman. "Well, but I hardly think it would pay, you know. Who would buy a man with an expression of countenance like that? To be serious, Julian, what is it all worth?"

The young man's face fell a little. It grew almost piteous in its deprecation, as he replied, "Consider, sir, that I have worked without thought of remuneration. I am but a learner, on the very lowest step of——"

"The ladder of fame," interrupted the old gentleman, with a shuffle. "I know that ladder, of old. It's a nasty, slippery, unsound affair, depend upon it; and, in speaking to me, my boy, never mind images. I am a plain man."

"These bits of illuminating," said Julian, with a gesture towards them, "are done for pleasure. I had intended to devote myself to mural painting."

"And what does that mean?" asked the old gentleman.

"Ornamenting the interiors of buildings," replied Julian, "after the fashion of——"

"Never mind when it was the fashion!" interrupted the old gentleman. "Will it pay?"

"At present, no," replied Julian; but he did not look at his companion when he said it. The latter glanced round the room again, on the back of a chair, and fixed his eyes on his godson.

"Julian," said he, "could you give it up?"

There was in his tone something which it had lacked before; a touch of feeling, as if it had occurred dimly to the elder man that there might, after all, be in these pursuits something hard to give up.

"If it is necessary," replied Julian, "of course I can."

"And take to real hard work?" said the old gentleman.

"Yes," replied Julian.

"Bravely spoken, my boy!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "And now, listen. I don't think a commercial life would suit you. I don't think you are fitted for it. What do you say to the idea of emigrating?"

The young man could only repeat the word in amazement, but his friend persisted.

"You will not think I propose this without due consideration," said he. "I always thought it a mistake for you to be wasting your life in this way. Formerly, however, you were at liberty to please yourself; at present I scarcely consider that you are so. You are strong, young, and active; not without brains; a likely-looking lad enough, in spite of your accomplishments here. The fact is, I have an enterprise in view, for which I want brains, and a reliable agent. I believe that you are especially suited to my purpose, and that you can do me service if you will, as well as taking the first step to your own fortune. I trust to your sense of duty to throw your heart into the work if you undertake it."

"But——" began Julian.

"I want no answer now," interrupted the old gentleman; "I am not so unreasonable. I would rather that you should consider well of the matter. Think of it. A new country, a glorious country, with scenery such as you have never dreamed of. There you may quadruple your capital—or mine, if you prefer that mode of speaking—and come back a rich man. Come back to take up your bits of pictures again, if you like. They, and all this miscellaneous property of yours, shall be respected. I promise that your studio shall be locked from all eyes, if that will please you. Now, good-bye."

The old gentleman was gone, and the young one, with a sigh, turned to lock after him. He seemed to have partially taken out of the room that load which had come in with him; that strange sudden waking up from a world of beautiful dreams into a common place, hard necessity. The presence of the old gentleman in that study was unusual and improbable; he had left an air of improbability and unreality over the news he had brought and the changes which it seemed imperative should result from them.

The young painter took up a brush and bent over his work. There was the gold, put on just before the coming of this ill-omened visitor. It lay waiting for him, with the burnishing stone beside it. There were the conventional outlines of leaves, flowers, and fruit, only wanting to be filled in with bright cadmium, lake, and ultramarine. How full of promise the sketch was! How beautiful the finished piece would be! And then he flung down the brush and turned away. It was no longer a fitting implement for his fingers. This terrible tale was true; he could no longer follow his own pleasure, but must work for his living.

Julian had an intense desire to sit down to the table again, and go on with that one piece. Surely there could be no such immediate necessity for breaking off his former studies; that might be done at any time. And was it not possible that in the distant future—no matter that it was distant—his genius and perseverance might achieve sufficient to satisfy him?—an amount of success which should serve for all his wants? But how was he to live now? And besides that the debt! The recollection of it fell upon him like a sudden blow. He had hardly realized the fact at first.

In the eyes of the world, indeed, if debt existed it would be no business of his; but in the eye of his own conscience and his gratitude, what was it? All his life long he had owed everything to the fallen man, his uncle—his education, luxuries, the smallest necessaries of life. Was the old man to put his shoulder to the wheel now, in the evening of his days, and the nephew remain a visionary—idle, or rather unproductive, inasmuch as the pursuits he loved were unproductive?

He went up to the easel and covered the picture gently; then he took down a frame from the wall and looked at its contents; a German poem, the illuminated border of which he had finished only the day before. He thrust this amongst other scraps, finished and unfinished, into a portfolio to put away; then he went to the window again, standing where he had stood whilst his friend talked with him.

His eyes, to all appearance, were looking upon the scene outside—the swaying tree-tops, and the copper tints of the western sky; but in reality he saw none of these. He saw instead another room, singularly unlike his own; delicate fingers were there, and made it beautiful to the eye of artist and poet. A shadow fell upon the wall of that room, and a dark-eyed girl rose up from her seat to meet him. The young painter stretched out his arms with an involuntary cry, "Clare! my Clare!" How was he to tell her that they must part? How bear the long years of waiting that must separate them? They might both grow old apart; that fortune which the old merchant spoke of so confidently might never come. What was he to do?

Through the long hours Julian thought, calling up his life in review before him, and in the twilight he went out into the streets of a changed world; for henceforth he belonged to the great army of workers for their daily bread. There was a certain sense of relief in the fact that his resolution was taken; and only once in that hasty walk his heart failed him for a moment. It was when he stood at the door of that room which had risen before his eyes in fancy, and saw the one he loved best on earth spring up to meet him. The next moment his arm was round her, and she was looking with bewildered inquiry into his face.

"Julian, what is it?" she asked.

"Are you strong, Clare?" said he. "Give me your hand—so. Now, then, I have bad news; are you afraid?"

"Never afraid, so long as you are safe, Julian, and in my sight," she replied.

"Don't say that; don't," said he, putting his hand upon her lips with a sudden exclamation of dismay; "for we must learn to live without seeing each other. Clare, I haven't a penny in the world, or the expectation of one."

He paused for a moment, and the girl bent her face to his hand and kissed it.

"I understand that," said Julian, smiling. "I never doubted you. But then we must live, you know; and to live, one must work. I have been a dreamer hitherto; now I am going to put my shoulder to the wheel. The very thought of it makes me strong, Clare; and we will do without each other a few years."

"Tell me your plans," said Clare.

When Julian had told her, Clare clung closer to him, and hid her face; but not for long. Julian felt his own grow pale as she raised it again with the desperate struggle after courage in it.

"My darling," said he, "we shall be together in thought. We can trust each other."

"Yes, Julian," she replied.

"And then there are the mails," said he.

"Yes," said Clare, firmly, thinking all the while that Julian might be dead long before a letter could reach her. And then, glancing at him, she saw that his fingers were playing nervously with the work she had just laid down, and a cry, which was half a sob, broke from her. How was she ever to bear with the old occupations when he was gone?

"Julian," said she, "give me something to do for you. I shall be happy then."

He looked down upon her gravely, and a quick gleam of intelligence came into his face.

"Clare," said he, "the poor little girl my uncle has so petted, it will fall heavily on her, his Mayflower, you know; and he will save nothing out of the ruin. Be good to my poor little cousin."

"Mine, too," said Clare, trying to smile. "Thank you, Julian, for that. And now——"

"A little longer," said Julian. "A few days, perhaps, and then——we will not think of the years that lie between, but of the meeting to come - shall we?"

* * * * * *

Clare stood on the same hearth, no longer a girl, but a gentle, beautiful woman, and a dark figure leaned against the mantelpiece beside her; but it was not Julian.

"What, back again, Hector!" she said, and her face was very sad as she looked at him. Her eyes were full of a strange wonder and compassion as the firelight flickered over his face for a moment, and then left it dark.

"Did you think that calm good-night was going to satisfy me?" said the young man, vehemently. "You are so cold to me—you, whose gentleness is on the lips of all who know you. Why is it?"

"I am not cold to you, Hector," she replied. "I am the same as ever."

She could not keep those eyes of wondering pity from his face, from reading the rebellion and passionate remonstrance which spoke in every feature of it. He was little more than a boy to her; and yet she saw now, for the first time, how strong the feeling was which had written itself there outwardly, as though he cared only that she should so read it.

"Not cold!" said he. "You have scarcely a word or a thought for me; and when I am here, you barely suffer my presence. Yes, you are the same as ever—that is what I complain of. You drive me mad——"

She stopped him with a look of pain.

"Hector," said she, "consider how unreasonable all this is."

"Clare," he replied, "understand that every word you say is as a sting to me. Have a little mercy, a little charity for me!"

"So I have," she replied—"so I will. Go, Hector—that is Marion's step. I would not have her see you thus."

"I will ask but one thing of you," said the young man, biting his lips hard. "Suffer me to come again, only once more, to-morrow."

Clare turned away from him, troubled, and ill at ease. In the pleading voice of this wilful boy there rang at times a tone that fell upon her like a sound from a far-off land—a faint and distant echo, coming over the restless waters to touch her with the great sorrowful longing of hope deferred. Would it not be better for him and for herself that she should tell him all?

"Come, if you will, Hector," she said.

He bent his head over her hand, the hand on which Julian's betrothal ring glistened, and touched it with his lips, but she hardly felt the touch, and then the door closed after him, and she was alone.

Did ever passionate human love such as Hector's fail to touch the heart to which it spoke? Clare was yet young, too young surely to give up all the hopes and dreams that cluster softly round a woman's life. There was another love, calmer than Hector's, like the ashes of a burnt-out fire; should she cheat him with a mimicry like that? Through all his passion and his pleading, the grave, thoughtful woman read, or believed she read, that it was but a fitful storm of excitement, a flash of boyish enthusiasm that would die out, and then——

A servant came in to light the lamp and lay a packet on the table. Clare turned and took up the packet absently; when the servant was gone, she opened it. There lay before her the German poem, Julian's last-finished work, with its rich border of birds and flowers. She sank

down on her knees before the table, and tears fell upon her clasped fingers as she read th e sentence that accompanied the work—"Found accidentally amongst some rubbish, from my poor godson's studio."

Clare took a pen and marked out the word "poor" from that sentence.

"Julian," she said, "my Julian—where?" But no one could tell her that.

The next evening Clare stood before the long glass upon the mantelpiece, waiting, and a strange expression came into her face. What beautiful woman is there who does not know that she is beautiful, and that beauty is a power, a rare gift? Such knowledge is distinct from vanity, inasmuch as, while it cannot but exist, it takes no note of itself. And Clare stood before the glass and looked at the reflection there. The soft folds of her dark dress became her. In the half-light of the fire the stamp of ten weary years seemed to have passed away and left her young again, an untried visionary girl.

"But I would not have it so," she said; "oh, not for worlds!"

Then all at once she turned away from the glass with a throb of pity and dismay, for Hector was there, kneeling before her, and pouring out the story she had hoped to silence upon his lips.

"I would have prevented this, if I could," she said, sorrowfully. "You are so hasty, so impetuous, Hector, my poor boy!"

"Reject me if you will," he cried, stopping her with a violent disclaimer of the unhappy word, "but not thus refuse my love, and send me away; but let it be as other men are rejected. Remember, I am no boy."

"I remember only the years by which my life is older than yours," she said, "and——"

"What of that, Clare?" he exclaimed. "Hear me a little longer. No lip that takes your name upon it speaks it as other names are spoken. Surly men soften at your name; shrill-voiced women calm themselves and grow gentler when they hear it. Indifferent people, whose time is swallowed up in doing the world's work, pause and turn aside for a moment to wonder what fascination hangs about it. Think, then, what it is to me. I will give up everything for your sake. My great ambition I throw at your feet. My riches shall go, as yours do, to feed the starving, and our home shall shelter the homeless. This is not all; if there is a hope for me—"

Clare put her hand on his shoulder, and felt that he shrunk from the touch as though it hurt him.

"Hector," she said, "I have something to tell you—a brief story. Will you listen?"

"I will hear whatever you have to say," he replied.

"There is no such feeling as you speak of in my heart," she said; "none such can ever come into it again. Ten years ago my promised husband went abroad. You knew nothing of me then; no one but myself can ever know what he was to me—what he is still. One letter reached me from him—one only; the first and the last. Then I heard that he was——"

"Dead!" exclaimed Hector.

"No, Hector—missing," she replied.

Then she told him the little there was to tell, and drew from her bosom a small morocco case, in which lay that one letter and a locket of hair. Through all these years that she had waited with hope growing fainter, no voice had brought tidings of him. Where, in all the wide, dreary world, had he found a resting-place? None could tell her. No soul knew how it was, or where, that he disappeared. All trace of him was lost.

The young man covered his face. He saw it all—the terrible agony of the first suspense, the long, hopeless waiting; the ghastly uncertainty, and the courage of the loving woman who bore it all so bravely. A little while he sat thus, hiding his face; then once more he bent his knee and took her hand, putting it to his lips.

"Clare," said he, "forget my love. I will go away now. When you see me again I shall be to you a true friend and brother."

She saw his face pale with strong emotion; she knew that he meant what he said, and a gleam of comfort stole across her pity for him. Then she stooped and kissed his forehead; a grave, womanly kiss, the seal of the compact between them.

The evening grew cold and still. Clare sat where Hector had left her, watching the faces that came and went between the bars of the grate. And by-and-by a light knock sounded on the door, and a radiant little figure came in, and sat on the footstool at Clare's feet, looking up.

"They said you had a visitor, cousin, and must not be disturbed."

Clare's hand wandered caressingly over the fair hair, and a smile stole to her lips. This was Julian's cousin, the poor "wee lammie" he had given into her charge ten years ago, and whose home was with her now.

"So I had a visitor," she replied; "but he is gone, Mayflower. You did not want me?"

"Not more than I always do," she replied.

A shadow passed over Clare's face. She scarcely knew why, but something in the words startled her into a sudden prevision of loneliness in the future. This child, who had so grown into her life, and who loved her now, might change with the changing years. Clare had yet to consider what her own world would be when that light should shine upon another hearth.

"Clare," said the girl.

"Well, Mayflower?" she replied.

"You are so grave," continued the girl. "The visitor was a tiresome one, I know. What are you thinking about? Would you rather I went away again?"

"No," said Clare, smiling into the upturned face. "I was only thinking—thinking what I should do if I had no Mayflower."

The girl started up with an exclamation of dismay.

"Clare!" she exclaimed, "what do you mean? What have I done? You are not going to send me away? I couldn't bear it; I couldn't live without you."

Then, as she met the tender eyes fixed upon her, a sudden rush of color spread over Marion's cheeks, and she hid them.

"Clare, if you mean that, I shall never care for any one as I do for you," she said. "I shall never leave you—I will never—"

Her lips were covered hastily, and she felt Clare's arm round her in a close embrace.

"Hush, my darling," said she, "that is not for you or me to decide; it is all in the future. I have you now; we will be satisfied with that, shall be?"

* * * * * * *

Clare sat by the fire, where she liked to sit in the twilight hour, though the time of year scarcely required fires; and because she sat there, another came and sat there too, on a stool very near to her. This was the light of the house, the treasure she could hardly bear out of her sight—the Mayflower that had come to cheer a life whose summer blossoms had been few, and gathered long ago, set aside, Clare herself would have told you, like precious memories never to be parted with, even in their ashes. But then, of these the Mayflower knew nothing. She held a book in her hand, and her head was bent down over it, one cheek resting on her hand, and it is just possible that her thoughts were not with the book itself. At any rate, Clare, looking down upon her, conceived some idea that they were not.

"Burning your eyes," she said, "and your cheeks, and head; scorching yourself to death, and all for the sake of one foolish chapter. Let us see, what book is it, Mayflower?"

"A borrowed book, cousin," replied the girl; but she kept her face hidden as she spoke.

"Borrowed?" said Clare. "I wonder who lends you books. There is only a Christian name on the title-page—Madeline."

"Yes, Clare—Hector's sister," she replied.

Clare never answered a word. Her hand, which had been wandering as usual amongst the fair hair, grew cold, so cold and nerveless, that by-and by Marion, still without looking up, put out her own wistfully, to clasp it; conscious, in a vague sort of way, that something was wrong, and yet unable to speak her thought.

"Madeline is very good, Clare," she said. "I don't mean that she is as good as you; you know no one ever could be that to me. But you are not vexed with me?"

"For borrowing the book?" said Clare. "No, Mayflower."

"Nor for anything else? Because you are not like yourself quite," said Marion.

"I was only thinking how fast the time flies," replied Clare, a little sadly. "Another month, and the trees will be bare again for winter."

"And I shall be twenty-one," said Marion—"of age, Clare, and beginning to go down hill."

The two looked at each other, and the smile faded out of Clare's face, leaving it dark. Was it only the firelight that sent that sudden flash over the girl's cheek, and made her hide it? Clare knew better. In the tone of her brief answer there rang something so like a knell, that the child at her feet trembled, and grew pale, not knowing why.

Clare was not thinking of Hector's sister, but of Hector himself; and when by-and-by his well-known knock sounded through the hall, and his step was in the room, he came upon her an expected guest indeed, but one whom it cost her a struggle to welcome—only for a moment, however; the next, she was standing before him, with her arm round Marion, half smiling at the sight of his pleading face and agitated greeting.

"Clare," said the young man, wistfully, "it was three years ago."

She would have understood him without that, well enough; three years since her story had silenced his boyish love for herself.

"I know it, Hector," she replied; "and now?"

"Take my thanks for all your goodness," said he; "to me and to——"

"My Mayflower, who is to be mine no longer," said Clare. "Is that it, Hector? It is an old story."

The smile was on her lip still, and Marion clung to her.

"Oh, Clare! never say that," she said; "yours always, both of us. We couldn't do without you."

"We!" echoed Clare. She said it very softly, as we repeat the name of a dead friend. Then she stooped to kiss the girl's forehead, and to put the hand which trembled so into Hector's, before she left them.

Many years have passed over Clare's head since that day, and she has ceased to question the wisdom that made her lot lonely. She is happy. Eyes that are weary with pain turn eagerly to look after her as she passes, and pale lips murmur blessings upon a blessed life; how blessed in its self-sacrifice and care for others, will be known only when the secrets of all hearts are told.

NOVEL COURTING.—Courting by means of the flute is very popular among the Sioux Indians. The flute is made of willow or some other wood that has a bark easily detached, and is usually about a foot in length. It has several perforations through the bark, each of which represents a musical note. The sound produced, though somewhat shrill and fife-like, is not unpleasant to the ear.

The Indian youth who desires a wife first mentally fixes his choice upon some maiden of his tribe. Then some pleasant evening he takes his flute and strolls through the village in the direction of the tepee of the maiden's father. He stations himself in a convenient spot, about fifty or sixty yards from her abode, and then, drawing the reed from beneath his blanket, begins to play a plaintive strain. While the young man is discoursing these strains, the maiden has remained quietly within her father's lodge, listening to the serenade with characteristic Indian composure.

When it becomes perfectly apparent to the father that his daughter is the object of this musical attention, he steps to the edge of his wigwam, and, if it is dark, issues forth and cautiously creeps behind the youth and ascertains who he is. Then he returns to his daughter and makes known his wishes in words something like this—"Go, my child—he is a worthy Dakota, and will make you a good master;" or, "Remain, my daughter—he is not a desirable person."

The maiden, in obedience to her parent's wish, advances timidly toward her lover if he is favored, or, if the paternal judgment condemn him, withdraws into the dark recess of the tepee.

In case the suit is favored and the maiden has gone out to meet the warrior, the young man, upon seeing her approach, gives a triumphant "toot" upon his flute, and then, throwing down the instrument, rushes forward to greet her whom he has so easily won.

THOUGHT.—Thought of any kind, to be valuable, must be conservative—that is, it must hold with a firm grasp all the truth that the past has handed down. It must accept humbly and reverently that which the wisdom of the ages has stored up, and so thoroughly incorporate it that it may form its very bone and muscle. Only thus can it acquire stability or permanence. At the same time it must be expansive, it must have the power of growth. It must be hospitable to new truths and fresh thoughts, willing to pursue inquiries, to attack difficulties, to solve knotty problems. Thus only can it hand down to posterity something worthy of its acceptance, and pay to the future the debt it owes to the past.

Scientific and Useful.

POTS.—Plants do not thrive satisfactorily planted in glazed pots. It is better to grow a plant in an ordinary pot and stand this inside the glazed one.

GAS.—The illuminating power of a gas lamp may be increased fifteen times, says a French inventor, by sending an artificial current of air through the flame. A small fan or ventilator worked by a weak current is employed for the purpose.

RAILWAY SEATS.—An invention provides for pneumatic seats in railway cars. These may be readily inflated by means of a hose connected with the pipes of the air-brake. In this manner may traveling be made a luxury at small permanent cost to the railway companies.

FISH HOOK.—A new fish hook has been invented. The bait holding device is supplied with self-opening hooks which are closed and concealed at their points and which spring in opposite directions when the slightest tension is put upon the line. One of the chief advantages claimed is that when the fish are landed they can be readily released.

BICYCLES.—A new bicycle tire, which is said to be an improvement over those in general use, has been invented and patented by Miss E. S. Hutchins, of Big Rapids, Mich. In the middle of the rim of an ordinary style pneumatic rubber tire is a groove, into which is fitted a smaller tire of leather, which it is claimed, is much more durable than the present style of all-rubber tires while equally elastic and light.

SYRUP ROADS.—The Utah Sugar Company has begun a novel use for the waste product from the works at Lehi, known as byproduct or molasses. Roads are actually being constructed with the syrups, which are valueless as sugar producers, the life having been extracted. The molasses is used as a cement, the body of the road material being made up of gravel. At first the molasses showed a tendency to ooze up through the garvel, but the application of an extra coating of gravel remedied this and made the road as smooth as a floor and as hard as pavement.

Farm and Garden.

FLOWERS.—It is said that cut flowers will keep very fresh if a small pinch of nitrate of potash, or common saltpetre, is put in the water in which they stand. The ends of the stems should be cut off a little every day to keep open the absorbing pores.

HOGS.—Hogs shipped into the stock yards show the result of too much in-breeding by careless farmers, who reason that it does not pay to get a new boar each year while they have one which will breed, and they lose enough in a litter or two to pay for a new sire.

ROADS.—Let us not be penny wise and pound foolish. Improvements are no waste. Good roads may easily increase the selling value of your farm more than they will cost you in increased taxes. The best is always best, and we should be determined to have our share of it.

ASHES.—Coal ashes is a good fertilizer for the smaller bushes. For potatoes nothing excels coarse horse manure; the straw will soon be washed clear as the manure soaks into the ground. After all, the best general manure is the finely pulverized soil, frequently loosened an inch or two deep.

HAMS.—To treat unsmoked hams, soak the meat twenty-four hours in cold water, then put the pieces down in a barrel, with a weight on top to keep them down, and pour over them a pickle prepared from water six gallons, brown sugar two pounds, saltpetre four ounces, boiled together and cooled. Pickle in this from four to six days, and then take out and smoke.

PLANTS.—When plants are not mulched the cool night air of the early spring, even if it does not check growth, does not advance it. A mulch admits air, warmth and moisture, and shuts out scorching sun and blighting wind. It also prevents the escape of fertilizing gases. It collects the heat rays of the sun and retains them for the warmth and growth of the plant during the night season.

INSTEAD OF DRIVING WITH A HAND-KERCHIEF use Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant, which will loosen the phlegm, subdue inflammation, and certainly save your Lungs and Throat much dangerous wear and tear.

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The Way of the World.

In that portion of the globe where two people, meeting, greet each other with the genial process of rubbing their noses together, the proud and the rich are satisfied with giving their poorer brethren a nasal touch; but two old friends will rub their noses on each side, to and fro, like as a butcher sharpens his knife.

In our supremely civilized land, Dives, when rather uppish, will not offer his hand to lower acquaintances. They bow to the custom of what sailors call "tipping the fin;" and literally they shake hands as would a fish. We have known great men—very great men, in their own opinion—who afforded us only one finger to shake hands with—an index, in more senses than one, of the esteem in which they held the wondering young fellow whom they patronized. And in the old school we have heard that it was the custom of such people—gentlefolk, no doubt, but not of the highest school—to wave and waggle their hands at persons whom they cared little for; as much as to say, "Fellow, keep your distance—we are on speaking terms, and that is enough."

As a rule, however, the magical clasp of hand, by which one can tell so much, is conventionally observed all over the civilized world; and here where everybody is equal to everybody else, the President stands in his reception-room and shakes hands with all the crowd that streams in—sometimes with two thousand persons in one day—until his arm aches from the thumb to the shoulder blade.

Let us own, then, with all wise men, that conventional politeness is absolutely a virtue, because it is a necessity. "Gentlemen who live together," says Rochefoucald, "must be polite to each other;" and Lord Chesterfield follows in the same strain, and in one of his letters gives the following excellent advice to his son: "Know, then, that as learning, honor, and virtue are absolutely necessary to gain you the esteem and admiration of mankind, politeness and good-breeding are equally necessary to make you welcome and agreeable in conversation and common life. Great talents, such as honor, virtue, learning and parts, are above the generality of the world, who neither possess them themselves, nor judge of them rightly in others; but all people are judges of the lesser talents, such as civility, affability, and an obliging agreeable address and manner; because they feel the good effects of them as making society (or life) easy and pleasing."

This is very wisely and admirably expressed; and it is so true that a little reflection will call to mind how much pleasure an easy and good-natured address always gives, and how much pain is caused by rudeness and boorishness. Good-natured politeness is the best half of Christianity; and certainly he who at the end of life can reflect that he never uttered a rude word, or gave pain to any poor man or woman whom he addressed, would lie more easily than he whose presence was felt because of his sneers, and whose address was remembered because of its cutting sarcasm. And there are men, and women too, whose tongues seem not to have been made of flesh and blood, but to have been forged like steel swords—only to wound.

In other walks of life the ways of the world serve her well. Uniform in the army and navy does well; the uniform really does make the soldier. Conventional piety is very bad; the goodness that is assumed is generally of the most rotten description—as unlike the real thing as can be; but conventional bravery has more than once stood people in good stead.

A celebrated colonel, who had obtained many decorations and a cross of honor, owned that, unless with his regiment and in uniform, he was the biggest coward possible. "Monsieur," said a French officer under Turenne, to his colonel, "why do your legs tremble so?" "Because," replied the other, "they know very well into what confounded dangers my heart will carry them."

Rochefoucauld has an excellent little chapter—so we may call it, for it is not like his shorter maxims—upon the different sorts of valor—how some had a valor which carried them into action, some had that which did not crop up till the middle of the battle, others that which sustained them at the end of the fight; some soldiers were good behind walls or ditches, or any shelter, however small; others only brave at charges and open assaults; some feared swords, and some bullets. Few, very few, were brave in the night, or under sudden attacks. But that kind of valor was got by discipline.

Rochefoucauld was not only an admirable gentleman, a duke of high lineage, but a fine soldier; and what he says agrees with the opinion of the little Corsican lieutenant, who certainly could not be considered of "blue blood." "Few people," said Napoleon the Great, "have got what I have got—the two o'clock of the morning valor; I have that, and that is how I conquered." He hesitated on account of modesty, but he spoke the truth. He had a splendid valor when in health; when sick, he was timid and blundered; but at the Bridge of Lodi and elsewhere, the two o'clock of the morning courage—that ready for any emergency and enduring through the night—came out strongly.

We may concede, then, that there is a certain conventionality in the bravery of soldiers, just as there is in the politeness of shopkeepers. So there is in their brutality. When held in hand and under control, no one is more subservient, mild, or meek, than a good soldier. In times of peace, all the world over, Johnny Raw plays with the babies, carries home the washing, and courts the servant girls; but when infuriated, during a siege, or when allowed to have his will, the brutality of the man is something disgraceful to humanity.

In the "Birkenhead," the record of the loss of which is as noble as that of the most desperate battle ever fought, the soldiers stood to their arms and went down slowly to their deaths, so that the women and children might be saved.

Conventionality does much. Even filibusters, and burglars, and such swaggering ruffians, are vilely coarse and brutal because it is the fashion with them to be so. Lord Byron has described a silken, polished kind of pirate: "He was the mildest-mannered man that ever scuttled ship or cut a throat;" and Shakspere's Hamlet finds out that "one may smile, and smile, and be a villain; at least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark."

Let us own that, of the two, if the harsh ruffian is the less dangerous, the smooth one is the more pleasant. After being conventionally a villain, he might, by force of reason, be persuaded that it was much easier to be good, and that amongst the pleasant ways of the world is the one which it has of esteeming honesty, and making, with all its shortcomings, the ways of goodness honorable, and the paths of rectitude peaceful.

THERE are thoughts which impress themselves upon the mind as new truths, and which sometimes amount to convictions. There are possible solutions to vexed problems of society which dawn upon the mind with unwonted clearness and light. There are dreams and hopes and ideals that visit some of us, and seem to promise great good and happiness to the world could they only be fulfilled. We have no right to neglect these suggestions, to drive them from our thoughts under the plea that we are too busy to deal with them or too ignorant to investigate them. The fact that they are actually in our minds and exerting some degree of pressure upon us is of itself a sufficient claim for their respectful consideration. They are a trust which we cannot rightly disclaim, a responsibility which we ought not to shrink from.

GOOD example is an unspeakable benefit to mankind, and has a secret power of influence upon those with whom we converse, to form them into the same disposition and manners; it is a living rule, that teaches men without trouble, and let them see their faults without open reproof and upbraiding. Besides that, it adds great weight to a man's counsel when we see that he advises nothing but what he does, nor exacts any thing from others from which he himself desires to be excused. As, on the contrary, nothing is more cold or insignificant from a bad man, one that does not obey his own precepts, nor follow the advice which he is so forward to give to others.

Addison says: "I have always preferred cheerfulness to mirth. The latter I consider as an act, the former as a habit of the mind. Mirth is short and transient, cheerfulness fixed and permanent. Those are often raised into the greatest transports of mirth who are subject to the greatest depression of melancholy; on the contrary, cheerfulness, though it does not give the mind such an exquisite gladness, prevents us from falling into any depths of sorrow. Mirth is like a flash of lightning which breaks through a gloom of clouds and glitters for a moment; cheerfulness keeps up a kind of daylight in the mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual serenity."

TRUE happiness is of a retired nature, and an enemy to pomp and noise; it arises in the first place from the enjoyment of one's self, and, in the next, from the friendship and conversation of a few select companions. False happiness loves to be in a crowd, and to draw the eyes of the world upon her. She does not receive any satisfaction from the applause which she gives herself, but from the admiration which she raises in others.

WE take our ideas from sounds which folly has invented: fashion, bon ton, and virtue are the names of certain idols to which we sacrifice the genuine pleasures of the soul. In this world of resemblance we are contented with personating happiness—to feel it is an art beyond us.

SAY nothing respecting yourself, either good, bad, or indifferent; nothing good, for that is vanity; nothing bad, for that is affectation; nothing indifferent, for that is silly.

IT is strange that, of all possible tasks, simply to be what we are should prove not the easiest, but infinitely the hardest.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

VOX.—"Ade" is the German form of adieu or good-bye.

STELLA.—The "shining morning face" is the emblem of youth and beauty; do not upon any consideration attempt to alter it.

DARK EYED.—Gossip to woman is as food to a laboring man. What would a woman do without taking? Shall we shut up nightingales, or put bull-finches to death? The only music of the season that we have enjoyed has been that of woman's tongue; and those that rail against it must belong to that Boeotian tribe of barbarians who are only accustomed to the bleatings of the animals which they tend.

LASSIE.—It is neither a pretty face nor a graceful figure that carries off the great prize in the lottery of matrimony. Men seek something beyond a mask or a statue. It is that something which reveals the inmost soul which charms; which makes a plain face beautiful, and rivets the fetters of Love. It permeates the whole woman, and reveals itself in the expression of her face, the tone of her voice, and in every action of her life. To be loved she must be seen in her home; her noblest station is retreat.

LUNATICO.—Persons sleeping in the beams of the full moon on the decks of ships near the tropics, etc., are struck with moon-blindness, not madness. Lunatics are called so because they are supposed to be under the influence of the moon in her various phases. Originally they were only a small class of madmen, and the fact is disputed. It is true the word is now used to denote all varieties of mental alienation which are not fatuous, and the class of monomaniacs is a large one. The supposed lunar influence is very old. Hippocrates had so great a faith in it that he recommended no physician to practise who was ignorant of Astronomy (not Astrology). The critical days were called crises (plural of our word crisis), and these were the seventh, fourteenth, and twenty one days of the disease, corresponding with the moon's phases. Hence he derives the twaddle about proper days for business, love making, etc. When the doctrine of the alchymists prevailed, the body was considered as a microcosm; the heart, the vital principle, was placed under the sun; the brain under the moon; Jupiter presided over the lungs, Saturn over the spleen, Venus over the kidneys, etc.

QUIVIS.—The theme of Faust by Goethe, Faustus by Marlowe, Browning's Paracelsus, a very noble poem, Byron's Manfred, and Bailey's Festus, is the same. It sets forth the emptiness and unsatisfactory nature of knowledge at the same time that it exalts the intellectual faculty of man. Hence in Faust, Festus, and Manfred we see the knowledge-seeker entangled in the meshes of passion, human pride; folly, absurd daring, and other low passions which the true knowledge-seeker would despise. The character of Manfred is that of Lord Byron himself, full of intense Byronic pride, deistic, semi-atheistic, profane, scoffing, and petty. No one would dare to write such a poem now. With our advanced knowledge, what poet would dare to mix up the Grecian Fates with a Persian god of the lower world, a chamois hunter and a Christian bishop, who is brought in to be snubbed, sneered at, and defied? There is a bold and genuine ignorance in Manfred, which is astounding. Paracelsus, as a knowledge-seeker, always a most entrancing ideal for youth, reaches the highest of all, although Goethe's Gretchen and Mephistopheles are unsurpassed. Paracelsus, dying, confesses "I am he that aspired to know," and learns "to see a good in evil and a hope in ill success." And he is wise enough to see that partial knowledge is alone given to man. So we must all confess it. How much better this confession than the sneer and defiance with which Manfred dies! The whole of this subject is full of intense interest, and upon it speculation may employ itself to its widest limits.

SCRUTAOR.—The doctrine of "development" is a simple statement of what is believed to be the method or law of growth by the influence of circumstances. If a particular set of surroundings require or do not require certain developments of organic life, the requiring or opposing influences will act as excitants or repressants on the growth. It must needs take many succeeding generations to work the slightest changes. Six thousand years would be as a day in time. The scientist reckons progress by ages. Millions of years must have elapsed since the process of development began. It is not in the least degree necessary, or, as we think, reasonable, to accept the doctrine of "evolution" or "development" as superseding the idea of original creation. That is no part of the scientific view. When we look at dry seed, we know that it contains within it in some mysteriously latent form a power which will not only start it into apparent life under suitable conditions, but carry it successfully through all the stages of a process of development necessary to produce the full plant with all the beauty of flower and fruit. Because it possesses this force, and is capable of being cultivated so as to bring out some of the latent properties and repress others, we do not say it cannot have been created. We say there were a plant before it from which this seed came; but, if we trace seeds and plants back to remote antiquity, we still stand face to face with the fact that there must have been a first cause, a primary source of the force we call life. The doctrine of "development" throws light on the manner of development, not on the cause or origin of life.

THE TESIS.

BY W. W. LONG.

The heart that passes through,
The test of grief and doubt;
Will some day see a sky of blue,
And tender face of love shine out.

The heart that suffers care and hate,
In sorrow and in pain,
Will some day see the pearly gates
Open to love again.

Her Only Chance.

BY F. O. M.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

ON the whole, this walk was far the most enjoyable portion of the afternoon. Her companions certainly did not exert themselves to entertain her, but on the other hand, they did not attempt to exclude her from their conversation. By the time she had heard the propriety of making some slight pecuniary acknowledgement to the gardner discussed in all its bearings by the three ladies, and the idea finally dismissed as being "quite unnecessary," she felt she had gained a certain insight into the habits of those favored circles into which it was her one ambition to penetrate.

She was not disillusionized by the discovery that an economical countess very much resembles anyone else with a taste for saving. She could even find excellent excuses for little eccentricities on the part of the aristocracy which she would never have advanced on behalf of a poor acquaintance.

As they completed the circuit of the last greenhouse, they were suddenly confronted by Mr. Croft. This time he was quite alone, and had the expectant air of a person who is bent on attaining some definite object.

At the mere sight of him Laura felt a revival of all her old doubts and waverings, and she hastily resolved to avoid anything like a private interview. Unfortunately for the success of this plan, she could not very well push past the other ladies, and escape from the greenhouse before them.

She was obliged to wait patiently until the last, and then in her confusion she shut her dress into the doorway and had the mortification of seeing the rest of the party walk on with the utmost unconcern, whilst with great deliberation Mr. Croft released her from imprisonment.

"I can hardly expect you to believe me," he began gravely; "but it is nevertheless true, that you slammed the door yourself, and I had nothing to do with it!"

"Did I?" answered Laura, so preoccupied with calculating her chances of escape that she scarcely heard what he was saying. Her only anxiety was to get within earshot of the others with the least possible delay.

"We seem to have shaken off all the old women at last," resumed Mr. Croft, looking furtively round. "I thought we should never get rid of them."

It can easily be imagined that this remark was eminently fitted to irritate Miss Leslie. The implied unity of purpose, and the reckless classification of Mrs. Hall and the countess under the same head alike affronted her susceptibilities.

"This wretched party has been a regular fraud," he continued, perfectly unconscious of offence. "I did not waste a whole afternoon merely for the pleasure of taking a prolonged stroll with Mrs. Hall."

"Indeed! What did you expect?" replied Laura, more for the sake of saying something than with any real curiosity to hear his answer. No sooner were the words spoken than she realized her folly in giving him such an opening.

"Now, Miss Leslie," he began, and the very tone of his voice warned her of danger, "that question is really a trifle unimaginative! You must know that I had every reason to expect a very much pleasanter afternoon than I have yet had!"

Laura could not trust herself to speak. If she had only disliked Mr. Croft, it would all have been so beautifully simple. But she felt more strongly every moment that she liked him only too well, and that her sole chance of safety lay in flight. If she listened to him she knew that she should yield at once, even though she might regret it all the rest of her life. At this critical juncture, she was joined by an unexpected auxiliary in the shape of the stout major, who arrived, rather cross and breathless with his hurried pursuit.

"Miss Coventry sent me to look for you," he panted. "She wants to know if you will have some tea. I thought I should never find you," he added testily. "I wonder why ladies always wander to the farthest point from the refreshments?"

"I am going home," announced Mr. Croft, curtly. "I have had quite enough of this. Shall you come?"

"Of course not," said Laura, relaxing into her first smile at the immediate prospect of relief. "I am enjoying myself immensely; but garden parties are only amusing when one knows everybody."

She enunciated the maxim with much greater boldness than she would have done an hour before; but her recent experiences had been of an inspiring nature. To be the object of a special embassy from her hostess was in itself no slight mark of distinction.

Who would have credited Miss Coventry with so much care for the welfare of her guests! The fact that Mr. Croft had turned away with an exclamation of ill-concealed impatience in no wise damped her spirits.

She was only glad to be released from the constraint of his presence and left free to pursue her little ambitious schemes without risk of exciting his ridicule

At last the long afternoon came to an end. The guests dispersed slowly, not knowing when they might again have the chance of inspecting the glories of the Hall.

The majority were delighted with their reception, and Sir Gilbert's affability threatened to become a standard topic of conversation in the neighborhood. Not so much was said about Miss Coventry. It was generally agreed that she was very proud, and though this was admitted to be a suitable weakness in the daughter of a baronet, still it naturally precluded enthusiasm on the part at social inferiors.

As for Laura, she returned home radiant. Miss Coventry had so far unbent at parting as to murmer a vague hope that they would now see more of each other—words which filled her hearer with the wildest dreams of future bliss. All trifling annoyances were forgotten in the face of the brilliant prospect now opening before her.

No wonder she looked even prettier than usual, as with glowing cheeks she bounded into the old-fashioned drawing-room in search of her father.

True, he was not by any means a sympathetic listener, nor was his daughter at all in the habit of confiding in him her hopes and fears; one reason for her reticence being, perhaps, an innate consciousness that in most cases they took diametrically opposite views of a subject. Be that as it may, there are moments when the most self constrained feel more expansive than usual, and it was with a sense of real disappointment that she glanced round the room and found it empty.

Not quite empty, though! Someone started up from a dark corner and seized her hand with a low cry of admiration.

"Oh, Laura! Have you come to make me happy at last?"

Then she found herself encircled by a strong arm, and drawn close to Mr. Croft's side in a lover-like embrace, which, for the moment, admitted of no resistance.

It is necessary to explain this extraordinary proceeding by stating briefly that the unfortunate man had been awaiting her return for nearly an hour, during which period he had ample time to persuade himself that he was very much in love with Laura, as well as irretrievably committed to making her an offer.

As to her feeling he had some excuse for imagining that she had betrayed them pretty clearly. He completely misunderstood her flushed cheeks and air of joyous excitement, attributing it wholly to her unfeigned delight at his presence.

"How lovely you are," he exclaimed, stroking her golden hair. "Why didn't you tell me before? Why have we wasted all this time without understanding each other?"

For one long moment Laura yielded to the situation. It seemed so fatally easy to acquiesce in this arrangement, and thus for ever end her difficulties. Then suddenly consciousness returned with a rush and she tore herself away.

"How dare you speak to me like that?" she stammered out at last. Her sole chance of not breaking down hopelessly was to affect an amount of indignation which she was far from feeling. "I never gave you the right to do anything of the kind."

"No, I know you have not. I am very sorry," returned Mr. Croft humbly. Perhaps he had been too precipitate and had alarmed the sensitive girl. "I always was such a fool about this kind of thing!" he reflected.

At the same time he could not help noticing that Laura looked much more attractive than usual in her excitement. He did not attach the slightest importance to her vehement protestations, concluding that they were only the result of shyness, which would easily yield to a little judicious coaxing.

"I am sorry you were startled," he began again in rather a subdued tone. "I thought you understood me yesterday, and had recognized my numerous efforts to speak to you this afternoon. In fact I was vain enough for a moment to fancy that you were looking forward to this meeting as much as I was."

No responsive smile appeared on Laura's face. The soft dimples had stiffened into hard, resolute lines. The white brow was puckered with intensity of thought. She was making up her mind to resist all weakness, however much the resolution might cost her.

She was for the first time called on to act up to her principles, and an unexpected obstacle had arisen in the shape of a traitor in the camp.

For a few seconds it was a hard struggle between brain and heart; but as might have been anticipated from Laura's antecedents, the brain came off completely victorious.

"I cannot imagine what you are alluding to, Mr. Croft," she began with metallic politeness. You seem to be laboring under some extraordinary delusion respecting our relative positions. But I am willing to accept your apology on the understanding that you never revert to the subject. Good-bye."

"Nonsense! You must wait and hear me out." And Mr. Croft slammed the door with rather more violence than was absolutely necessary. "To the best of my abilities I made you an offer yesterday, and I was under the impression that you had practically accepted me. You must forgive me if I acted on this assumption. But, oh, Laura!" he continued with a sudden collapse of formality, "didn't you ever mean it?"

"No, never. Don't you see there are insuperable difficulties in your position—and the farm—and everything," concluded Laura rather limply. Her chief desire was to bring the interview to an end without a direct explanation. But this was not to be.

"Oh, you don't like the farm? Well, I don't blame you for that. I am getting rather tired of it myself, and I shall not be at all averse to moving on if I can take you with me. So the insuperable objections have already vanished into thin air."

"What hopeless denseness men invariably display if one attempts to hint at anything disagreeable!" thought Laura. "It is a simple waste of time trying to spare their feelings."

"You misunderstand me," she said. "You have been very kind to my father, which I shall never forget. As for myself, every position has its obligations, and I am sure that I should find no happiness in forgetting them."

"I am afraid you must think me very slow, but candidly I am completely mystified! Your position, you say, will not permit you to marry?"

"Out of my class!" rejoined Laura impatiently. "Imagine what my friends—what Miss Coventry, for instance—would think if I married someone they could not recognize! Oh, I might be fond of you, but I could never survive such a disgrace!"

This statement had at least the merit of extreme lucidity. It penetrated even Mr. Croft's dense armor of unconscious complacency. For the first time he saw the situation from Laura's point of view. He remained silent for awhile, busily engaged in readjusting his impressions of the female sex.

Laura stood, red and miserable in the middle of the room, feverishly twisting her handkerchief in her trembling fingers. She had never contemplated speaking with such brutal directness. The truth had slipped out unawares. But she would not withdraw a word. Besides, it was now too late.

Mr. Croft was taking leave of her. A few conventional parting phases, and he was gone; his presence already nothing but a memory.

"I certainly put him in his place that time," muttered Laura. But the would-be triumphant words died away upon her lips, and it was with a very sad face that she presently crept up to her room. There was little fear, after this last rebuff, that Mr. Croft would again venture to take any liberties.

In spite of this exhilarating reflection, she felt unaccountably depressed. Even the indisputable beauty of the new hat failed to extract a smile.

Still it was characteristic of the girl, that notwithstanding a good deal of genuine emotion, she mechanically performed all her usual observances with regard to new clothes; making them the subject of much minute study in the looking-glass before packing them away in their respective boxes for the night.

Things looked much brighter next morning. Laura was quite herself again, and comfortably convinced that she had acted all along with her invariable good common sense.

She was a little ashamed of her past weakness, and blushed as she recalled her narrow escape of committing a sentimental folly.

In future she would be careful to avoid such pitfalls, and interest herself solely in the steady pursuit of social advancement. As a preliminary step she must at once cement her friendship with Miss Coventry.

Theoretically, it seemed such a natural arrangement that two lonely, motherless girls, living within half a mile of each other, should be inseparable companions. Practically, they had hitherto seen little more of each other than if they resided in different continents.

Still there seemed a promise of better things in Miss Coventry's parting speech. Perhaps this crisis was destined to be the turning point of her career.

Laura hugged this idea during the succeeding weeks. Morning after morning she rose full of hope. Surely Miss Coventry would call or possibly invite her to spend the day by way of inaugurating their new intimacy.

Of course she did not neglect the obvious step of calling at the Hall shortly after the party. She was rewarded by the information that Miss Coventry was out—a statement which was evidently veracious, as she was distinctly visible upon the tennis-lawn, surrounded by a laughing group of friends.

Laura tried to console herself with the reflection that she had probably not been recognized at that distance. But, look at it which way she would, it was a disheartening incident and seemed to accentuate the gulf between Vicarage and Hall.

Judge, then, of Miss Leslie's excitement, when one afternoon, whilst saunteringly listlessly back from an objectless stroll, she encountered a smart groom, in the well known green livery, trotting jauntly down the moss-grown drive. Apparently the long expected message had come at last.

She would have run all the way up to the house but for a certain habitual self-consciousness, which led her to believe that the servant might suspect and ridicule her anxiety. After all, there was no need to hurry.

Five minutes more and Laura was in the hall, contemplating with a blank countenance a card which lay upon the table. At first she almost doubted the evidence of her senses.

A further examination proved that her apprehensions were only too well founded.

There lay the card, clearly bearing the magic letters, P. P. C.

For a moment Laura stood paralized by this unexpected blow. Then she adopted the unprecedented course of going straight to her father's study. She found the old gentleman absorbed in the perusal of catalogues.

In the seclusion of his apartment, he relapsed frequently into the rusty black coat and easy carpet slippers which were now rigorously banished from the drawing-room.

He started guiltily at the entrance of his daughter, shuffling his feet under the table, in a vain hope of concealing some of the more obnoxious articles of his attire. Laura had hard work to speak respectfully as she took in the details of this homely scene.

If carpet slippers could be annihilated by scornful glances, Mr. Leslie's old favorites would long since have ceased to exist.

"Look at this, papa!" And the important card went flying across the table amongst a forest of dusty books and papers.

"Well?"

Laura was maddened by the mildly interrogative tone and look.

"Well," she echoed, harshly. "Did you know that they were going away?"

"You mean the Coventrys?"

An impatient gesture was the only reply.

"Sir Gilbert gave me to understand as much last Board day. He mentioned that his daughter's health caused him some anxiety, and he talked of spending the winter abroad to avoid the damp——"

"The Hall is not damp, and Miss Coventry is as strong as I am," interrupted Laura, dogmatically. "And why did you say nothing about it?"

"You never asked me, my dear."

Argument with this impracticable old gentleman was a sheer waste of time. Laura left the room, choking ostentatiously at the smoke curling up from her father's pipe.

It was probably mere scandal that attributed the vicar's increasing fondness for tobacco to the fact that his daughter had an unconquerable aversion to the smell. But perhaps we shall be justified in assuming that he did not altogether regret the circumstance which deprived him of her company during a considerable portion of the day.

So ended Laura's sanguine dream. It would be difficult to describe what a blank the absence of the Coventrys created in her life. It was certainly not owing to the frequency of their meetings.

But lately her imagination had been exclusively engrossed with various brilliant plans, all turning on her projected intimacy with the Hall party. These were now necessarily at an end.

Her social efforts were evidently not destined to be successful, and she had no home interests to fall back upon. Life for the future threatened to be an interminable succession of monotonous duties grudgingly performed.

To crown her vexations came the news that Mr. Croft had left the neighborhood for an indefinite time, probably for months, as he had installed the bailiff in the farm house.

True, she had rejected him in most insulting terms, and still daily repeated that she did not regret having done so. Nevertheless she felt that the bare chance of an occasional meeting during the deadly dulness of the long winter would be a pleasing excitement.

Of course she would never again run the risk of encouraging him too much. Still, at times she positively yearned for any variety in her present existence.

Laura meditated profoundly over the past during her long walks about the frost bound lanes (for though she loathed country walks, she was far too sensible to stay indoors, realizing fully how much health and a good complexion depend upon regular exercise).

She was consistently positive that she had acted with the utmost discretion in remaining true to her ideal match. But where was the reward of virtue? When would the fairy prince appear upon the scene?

As time wore on her position became more and more intolerable. She had never made any secret of her contempt for such society as the village afforded. Still it was with a certain shock that she found herself excluded from all the little Christmas gatherings.

At least she would have liked her absence to be optional. But some acute local intellect had penetrated Miss Leslie's design of holding herself aloof, and it was unanimously decided not to give her the chance of refusing invitations.

So the weeks dragged on. The intolerable monotony of a long frost was only relieved by an occasional half hearted thaw. About once a week the barometer promised a change of weather, which, after much indecision, usually took the form of a heavy fall of snow.

Then as a rule the temperature rose for a few hours and the surface of the earth was reduced to slush. After which it invariable froze again harder than ever.

But towards the end of February the change came. The air felt soft and caressing. Unsuspected patches of snowdrops cropped up in all the odd corners. The worms emerged from their enforced retirement, and were welcomed without a moment's delay by the ever watchful blackbirds.

Though Miss Leslie cared very little about flowers or birds, and absolutely ignored the existence of worms, she was infected by the general atmosphere of hopefulness.

Surely the spring must bring some change into her life also. Unconsciously she lived in a state of perpetual expectation.

It seemed quite natural that her father should enter the room one evening a little more briskly than usual, announcing, as he took his seat at the end of table, that he had just heard some news.

"You sometimes complain that I live too exclusively in my books, my dear; but I have been beforehand with you this time."

"What is this wonderful event? Is your new school master going to leave, or——"

"Nothing of the sort," interrupted the old gentleman, chuckling softly at the excellent joke he had in store for his daughter. "Guess again! I will give you a clue; it concerns Miss Coventry,"

"She is going to be married."

"Dear me! Ladies seem to divine these things by intuition," observed Mr. Leslie, helping himself pensively to a cutlet. "Very extraordinary! Now no man would have thought of that."

"A good match, of course?"

The vicar assented with a cheerful nod. "Very good, I should say."

A long pause followed this statement, during which Laura envied Miss Coventry from the bottom of her heart.

"Well my dear, what do you think of my news?" said her father at last. He seemed strangely elated at being in the unusual position of communicating a piece of gossip.

"I think some people have all the luck," replied Laura, wearily. "Did you hear the man's name?"

"Ah, capital! Now we have come to it at last. You must positively guess the name——"

"But I know so few of the Coventrys' friends," interrupted Laura, impatiently.

"It is not that fat old major who was at the garden party? He looked at her a good deal, I noticed."

"No! no!" broke out the vicar, unable any longer to contain his excitement. "What do you say to our friend Croft being the happy man?"

For one moment Laura suspected that her excellent parent had broken through the traditions of a lifetime, and made a joke. A glance reassured her on this point. He was evidently stating a sober fact.

"But you said it was a good match!" was all she could gasp.

"So people seem to think it, now that he has come into his cousin's property. The cousin was a bachelor, and died at Rome of fever, and Croft came into ten thousand a year. For my part, I always considered him a very companionable young man," concluded the vicar, testily. His piece of news had failed to elicit the exclamations of delight he had anticipated.

"Has she known him long?" inquired Laura, faintly.

"Some time, I believe. I hardly like to repeat such gossip, but they say that Miss Coventry only came down to the Hall for the summer because she heard that Mr. Croft was in the neighborhood; but——"

"And you have known all along that he was an acquaintance of the Coventrys?" interrupted Miss Leslie, sternly.

"Yes, I suppose so, my dear. At least I don't think he ever made any secret of it, though he did not seem very interested in them at that time, as far as I noticed."

"Oh, why did you never tell me?" she muttered in a tone of condensed rage.

"My dear, I do not remember that you ever asked me the question," answered her father, simply.

Laura sat quite still, her face growing harder and paler every moment. She felt too sick for further argument or recrimination. Her past seemed illuminated by a lightning flash.

"I loved him all along," she thought with despair. "I know it now that it is too late; I sacrificed everything to my miserable ambition, and now I am to be punished for it all the rest of my life."

For Laura had no illusion on the subject. She felt with all the force of conviction that as far as she was concerned the fairy prince had come and gone, and in spite of all her careful scheming, she knew that she had missed her only chance!

The Gypsy Queen.

BY S. G.

"MURDER!—Help!—Oh, help!"

How sharp and fearfully distinct that cry rang out on the midnight air! But there were none to hear it, except the two ruffians, who pressing still closer to their victim bore him heavily to the ground.

"He is dead!" said the oldest one, placing his hand upon the heart of the wounded man, who lay upon the ground without sense or motion.

"We had better make sure of it," said the other, significantly pointing to the river at a short distance.

His companion understood, and without a word on either side they lifted up the body and carried it to the river. There was a heavy splash, something that sounded like a stifled groan, and the broad waters rippled quietly over it—the moon looked down as calmly and placidly as if crime and murder were a thing unknown. The two men then mounted their horses and rode swiftly away.

"This is a good night's job," said the shorter and the younger of the two.

"I should judge so," returned the other, drily, "as it gives you one of the richest earldoms in England."

"Ay, and by my knightly faith, you shall find that the Earl of Egberton is not ungrateful," said the other. "The thousand pounds shall be yours to-morrow, and if there is anything else I can do for you, you may command me to the full extent of my power."

"There will be a merry bridal to-morrow," said his companion.

"Very!" replied the younger one, with a light mocking laugh.

"Lady Blanche will wait long at the altar for her lover; and as for my good cousin Walter, who has been my rival in love and ambition, I'll warrant he'll sleep as sound to night as he would were he pillowed in her arms! But we must separate here," he added as they emerged into the open country. "We must not be seen together. Adieu! We shall meet to-morrow at the bridal."

And so saying he turned the head of his horse into one of the two roads that were before them, and his companion taking the other, they parted.

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In an elegant boudoir, partly reclining on a low couch, was a fair young girl of not more than twenty summers, apparently in a deep reverie. Her thoughts were very pleasant, for there is a half smile around her mouth, and an expression of thoughtful and subdued tenderness in the deep blue eyes and on the smooth brow. Her maid, who had entered some minutes before, but who had hesitated to disturb her, now approaches.

"It is nearly ten, Lady Blanche," she said, addressing her young mistress, "in half-an-hour the guests will be here."

"Can it be possible that it is so late as that?" she replied, starting from her seat. "Ah, Martha, I am so very happy!"

"Heaven grant that it may last, lady!" said Martha, solemnly.

A shadow fell across the young girl's sunny face. "I am afraid I am too happy for it to last," she said, thoughtfully. "But come, Martha," she added, gaily, "your skilful fingers must be more than usually nimble, or I shall be late at my bridal."

It did not take Martha long to loop back those clustering curls, and to arrange the shining folds that fell so gracefully around that exquisitely moulded form; yet she had hardly finished when there was an impatient knock at the door, and a man entered whose bowed form and white hair bore the impress of extreme old age. It was Lord Cantref. He gazed upon his daughter for a moment with an expression of mingled pride and pleasure.

"Heaven bless you, my beloved child!" he murmured, fondly. "But come," he added, "the carriage is waiting, my love, and our friends are growing impatient."

"Has not Walter been here yet, father?" inquired the young girl.

"No," replied her father quickly. "It is rather strange; but I suppose something has detained him. He will probably meet us at the church."

As Lady Blanche passed down through the group of liveried servants that lined the hall, every one anxious to catch a glimpse of the bride, many a heart blessed her sweet face, and prayed that all the bright anticipations its smiles and blushes shadowed forth might be realized.

To Lord Cantref's surprise, the Earl of Egberton was not at the church door when they arrived. His brow grew dark with anxiety, though he endeavored to allay the apprehensions of his daughter, whose cheeks alternately flashed and paled at her embarrassing position.

Just as they were about to return, Lord Cantref noticed a horseman approaching at a furious pace, whom he recognised as Mr. St. Croix, the young earl's cousin. His clothes were torn and dusty, and his face pale and haggard, as he hurriedly alighted from his horse, which was covered with sweat and foam.

As his eyes fell upon Lady Blanche, he hesitated, and casting a significant glance upon Lord Cantref, beckoned him aside. But this movement did not escape the observation of Lady Blanche, whose cheeks grew pale with fear.

"It is from Walter!" she exclaimed, breaking from her attendants and following her father. "Tell me," she added, wildly, addressing St. Croix, "is he ill—dead?"

"Be calm, my dear child," said Lord Cantref, soothingly, whose countenance betrayed great agitation; "the young earl is not dead, only missing. It is to be hoped he will yet be found."

Lady Blanche made no reply, but fell pale and gasping into her father's arms, who quickly conveyed her to the carriage.

Many of the bystanders gathered around St. Croix, anxious to know the cause of this strange scene. From the narration he gave, they gathered that the earl had disappeared, no one knew whither. That there was no clue to his fate, excepting his horse, which came home a few minutes after midnight, with dark stains of blood upon his breast and sides.

The grief and sorrow with which St. Croix narrated these circumstances produced a very favorable impression on those who heard him; for he was next of kin to the earl, and upon his death would come into the possession of the earldom.

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"My child," said Lord Cantref, a few months after, who was in close and earnest conference with his daughter. "I would not urge you to take this step, were I not assured that it would result in your ultimate happiness."

"I do not doubt it, father," said Lady Blanche, languidly. "But somehow the very thought is repulsive to me. I never liked Mr. St. Croix, and cannot say that I like him any better since his accessions to his new honors. There is, to my woman's instinct, something treacherous and cruel in the very glance of his eye and the sound of his voice."

"You are prejudiced, my daughter," said her father. "I see nothing of this. Indeed, I believe him to be an honorable man, and in every respect worthy of you. You have no brother," he added, solemnly, as his daughter made no reply, "and will soon have no father, for my race is nearly run. It grieves me to leave you so unprotected, and it would take the last sting from death could I see you Lord Egberton's wife."

"Let it be as you say, father," replied Lady Blanche, indifferently. "Since Walter is dead, I care little what becomes of me."

"The earl has been waiting some time to see you, Blanche," he continued; "may he come in and receive your consent from your own lips?"

Lady Blanche inclined her head; and in a few moments the wily man was by her side.

"I have no heart to give you," she said, in reply to his earnest protestations, lifting her eyes calmly to his face; "but my hand is yours whenever you choose to claim it."

"If the most devoted and tender love can win your heart, it cannot fail to be mine, dear lady," said the earl softly.

"Nay, Lord Egberton," said Lady Blanche, firmly, "it will avail little. All the heart that I have is buried in Walter's grave. Yet I promise that all I can give you shall be yours any day you name."

The earl murmured a few words of thanks, and then raising her hand respectfully to his lips, turned away, and mounting his horse, rode rapidly towards Egberton Hall, his heart full of exultation at his success.

As he was passing through a narrow defile, a form wrapped in a large cloak suddenly crossed his path, startling his horse so that he nearly threw him from his saddle. With a muttered imprecation he turned towards the intruder.

"It is I, Edward St. Croix!" said a deep, hollow voice; and throwing back the cloak, the pale light of the moon fell upon the tall form of a woman, clad in a strange, fantastic attire.

Her flashing eyes were black as midnight, as also was the heavy mass of disordered hair that fell below her waist; her complexion was dark, even to swarthiness.

Yet, in spite of her weird, unearthly aspect, there was something in the general contour of her face which showed that she had once possessed more than common beauty.

"Ardelle!" exclaimed St. Croix, astonished.

"Nay, Edward," said the woman, with a low, bitter laugh, "not the loving and trustful Ardelle, whom you lured by your vile arts from her happy home, but Cleopatra, the gypsy queen!"

"I—I thought—" stammered the earl.

"You thought me, as you intended me to be, dead!" she said, interrupting him with a still more bitter laugh. "But, my

friend, poison does not always kill, even when administered by so practiced a hand as yours. I have many an antidote for such as you gave me on the night of our last meeting!"

"You are talking at random, woman," said the earl, sternly, recovering, in a measure, his self-possession. "What is it that you want of me—money?"

"Not for worlds would I touch your gold, Edward St. Croix," exclaimed the gypsy queen with a haughty gesture; "red as it is with the blood of the innocent! No, I have come to warn you, man, that the cup of vengeance is nearly full, that the sword of justice is ready, even now, to descend upon your head! Go! and instead of fulfilling the wicked purpose that is in your heart to-night, mount your fleetest steed, and escape into some far country, and there by a life of penitence try to retrieve the past."

"Are you mad, woman, to address such language to me?" exclaimed the earl angrily.

"Nay, hear me out," said the gypsy queen, mildly. "To morrow is to be your bridal day, is it not—that is, to witness your marriage with the beautiful Lady Blanche?"

"It is," replied her companion, a grim smile of satisfaction flitting across his face at the recollection.

"Woe to the dove when it mates with the hawk!" said the gypsy. "Edward St. Croix, was not the earldom sufficient for thee, that thou must lay thy blood stained hands also upon the betrothed of thy murdered cousin?"

St Croix fairly reeled upon his saddle. "What do you mean?" he gasped.

"Nay, be calm," said the woman, mockingly, as she observed his agitation; "let not your craven heart fail you now. Dead men tell no tales! The moon that beheld that deed of blood, the river that received the body of the victim, have no tongue to accuse you. Yet is there one whose eyes were upon you, and whose vengeance will surely overtake you. Go! I warn you to flee from the wrath that is coming."

The earl remained some seconds with his eyes fixed intently upon the spot where the woman disappeared. The cool sweat started out in large drops upon his face, and his limbs shook as if he was seized with an ague fit.

"She is no woman," he uttered to himself, as he spurred his horse onward, "but a very fiend! But were she twice the fiend that she is, she should not stand between me and my promised bride!"

He reached Egberton Hall in safety, and endeavored with large draughts of wine to drown all recollection of the scene through which he had just passed. But it was in vain; those black eyes seemed to be burning into his very soul, and the tones of that strange mysterious warning still sounded in his ears.

"Pshaw!" he exclaimed, after an ineffectual effort to banish it from his mind; "it is a mere suspicion on her part; she can know nothing about it. But let her, too, beware; for if she crosses my path again, I will send her where her babbling tongue will keep quiet for the future!"

* * * * * * *

Once more Lord Cantref's mansion is all bustle and activity. The bells ring forth a merry peel, for it is the bridal day of the daughter of his house, the Lady Blanche, the Rose of Glen Valley.

A murmur of mingled pity and admiration filled the church as the bride entered. Her face was almost as pale as was the costly veil, whose ample folds fell nearly to her feet, and it bore the impress of deep-seated melancholy.

She looked more like a corpse than a bride, and the whole proceeding resembled far more a funeral than a bridal. The bridegroom soon entered, whose haggard countenance indicated that he had passed a sleepless night.

No murmurs followed his entrance, even among his own retainers, for he bore no resemblance to the late earl, his predecessor, whose affable and engaging manners had made him a general favorite. His morose, unsocial disposition and haughty bearing made him both disliked and feared.

As he took his place by the side of Lady Blanche he looked little like a happy bridegroom; his manner was abstracted, and his eye wore an anxious and restless expression, and several times he gave a sharp hurried glance around the church, as if fearing to meet some unexpected guest. He grew calmer, however, when the ceremony commenced.

When the old rector bade those "who knew cause or just impediment why those two persons should not be joined together in holy matrimony to declare it," it was considered by those who heard it as a mere matter of form, and they were startled by the sound of a deep hollow voice in their midst, which said, "Hold! I forbid the marriage."

The bridegroom turned towards the place whence it proceeded. He started, and grew pale, as his glance fell upon the swarthy brow and flashing eyes of Cleopatra, the gypsy queen.

Unabashed by his angry glance, or the many eyes fixed upon her, she exclaimed boldly, "I proclaim Edward St. Croix, falsely called Earl of Egberton, to be a foresworn lover, a treacherous kinsman, and a murderer, and therefore no fitting mate for the poor and gentle Lady Blanche Cantref."

"It is false—she is mad!" said the earl hoarsely. "Let the ceremony proceed."

"Fool!" muttered the woman, "you rush on your own destruction."

"Walter, Earl of Egberton," she added, impressively, turning towards a man who sat in the back part of the church, muffled up in a large cloak, "come forward and prove the truth of my assertion."

At these words the man arose, and throwing back the cloak, revealed a face, which though pale and ghastly, bore a strong resemblance to the young earl's. Then walking deliberately up the aisle, he approached the altar, and fixed his eyes sternly on the countenance of the guilty man.

When St. Croix's eyes fell upon him, he stood like one transfixed with horror. Then, throwing his arms wildly above his head, as if to protect himself from his further approach, he fell heavily to the floor, blood gushing from his mouth and nostrils.

All but one among the horror-stricken group supposed it to be the spirit of the unfortunate earl, which had returned to take vengeance on his murderer, and feared to approach him.

"But Lady Blanche, rushing forward, threw herself wildly upon the bosom of her lover, obtaining convincing proof as she did so, from the warm kisses that fell upon her cheeks and lips, that it was no spirit, but her own Walter.

When they lifted St. Croix from the place where he had fallen, they found that life had departed.

It seems that the wounds given to the young earl were not, as his murderers supposed, mortal. His plunge into the river, instead of rendering his death certain, restored him to consciousness and when he arose to the surface; he made a desperate effort to regain the shore. In this he would not probably have been successful, for he was very weak from the loss of blood, had it not been for the gypsy queen, who was crossing the river in a boat with some of her followers.

She picked him up, conveyed him to a tent, and with the most devoted and tender care nursed him through the long and dangerous illness that followed.

The earl, on his recovery, became aware of his cousin's usurpation of his estates and title, also of his betrothal to the Lady Blanche; but retaining a grateful sense of his indebtedness to the heroic woman to whom he owed his life, and who, in spite of all, still cherished a strong affection for his treacherous cousin, he allowed her to warn him, hoping that it would induce him to leave the country, delaying for that purpose his appearance until the very last moment.

There was another bridal day appointed, at which there were happy and smiling faces; the Lady Blanche, the beautiful Rose of Glen Valley, gave her hand to Walter, Earl of Egberton, at the altar of the ivy-clad church of Stoke-Cantref.

Both the earl and countess tried to induce Cleopatra, the gypsy queen, to settle down in the neat, pleasant cottage the earl had given her. But they could not prevail upon her to give up her roving life, to which she was strongly attached. She made it a rule, however, to visit Egberton Hall once a year, and the earl gave strict injunctions to all of his tenants that neither she nor her followers should ever be molested.

Many years have elapsed since the events here recorded; but in remembrance of services rendered by the gypsy queen, any member of that wandering tribe, who visits the neighborhood has always a hospitable reception from the descendants of the Rose of the Glen Valley.

TURKISH HUMOR.—As a specimen of Turkish humor may be taken the pleasantries of the Hodja (teacher and preacher) Nasr-Eddin. There are one hundred and twenty-five anecdotes in the book, and they are told in a very curt and plain-spoken manner.

Many of them are of the nature of our Gotham stories, or of the skits current among us on Irishmen. Thus, on one occasion, having been told by his wife that coldness in the extremities is a sign of death, and finding his own hands and feet numbed by frost, the Hodja thought he was dead, and lay down at the foot of a tree.

Up came wolves and ate his donkey. "It's lucky for you," cried the prostrate Hodja, "that the ass' owner is dead!"

One night he shot out of the window at what he thought was a robber, but it turned out next morning to be his own caftan hanging up in the garden. Perceiving that an arrow had pierced it, "Thanks, O Lord," he cried, "that I was not inside it, for otherwise I must have been killed!"

Another night, seeing the moon reflected in a well, he thought it had tumbled in, so he lowered a bucket to pull it out. The rope getting entangled, he pulled so hard that he broke it and fell backwards. When he came to after the shock, he saw that the moon was all right in the sky, "God be praised and thanked!" quoth he. "I've hurt myself, but at all events the moon is put back in her place."

Another set of anecdotes illustrates the Hodja's cleverness instead of his stupidity.

He was twice asked by people what became of the old moons. On one of those occasions he replied that they were minced into stars, on the other that they were sliced into lightnings.

A peasant once presented the Hodja with a hare, which was turned into soup. Next week the peasant called, and was hospitably treated. A few days later came several neighbors of the man who had given him the hare, and they also received a meal.

But when some fresh visitors arrived, claiming hospitality on the ground that they were neighbors of the neighbors of the man who had given him the hare, all they got from the Hodja was a cup of water apiece, with the information that it was "the sauce of the sauce of the hare."

AN IRISH MUD CABIN.—It consists of two rooms and possibly a small semi detached outhouse which is used as a storeroom for perishable articles. There is not a chink in the walls or thatch save a narrow chimney, which seldom or ever answers its purpose; the doorway faces the east and emits the smoke.

What little light penetrates the inside through the tiny window discloses the deep chocolate stain from the eternal turf-reek which pervades the atmosphere of the interior, and literally paints walls, roof, and furniture a uniform color. The furniture is rough and also scanty, a few stools atoning for the occasional complete absence of chairs.

The mud floor is always more or less wet from the patter of the children's bare feet or from the animals which have free access to the house. At night there is a goodly company within the walls of this spacious mansion. In the inside room there are two or three box beds or berths, where the children sleep, according to their age and sex; from nine to twelve is not an uncommon number in a family.

In the state berth in the cailliogh, or recess at the side of the hearth, where the parents repose unscreened from the stock of the farm, and breathe the live same atmosphere as some eight quadrupeds besides the poultry.

Pigs, cattle, dogs, cats and probably a horse or donkey, have their bed space respectively, and jealously resent any encroachment by a bed-fellow. Astonishing as it may appear, there are hardly any disagreeable odors.

The overpowering smell of the peat smoke, evidently acts as a complete disinfectant, and fortunately it is innoxious to the inhabitants of the hovel. Equally astonishing is the fact that the whole community are in comparative harmony, and even the babies rarely cry. There is plenty of occupation for all the family who are able and willing to work, the mother doing little else but nurse the youngest infant.

CONTENT, that divinest joy, that fulness of perfect peace, that only true rest of the soul, is the gift of God through work, true work in which we can see meaning and use, and which we can accomplish.

IT is hard to personate and act a part long; for where truth is not at the bottom, nature will always be endeavoring to return, and will pass out and betray herself one time or another.

At Home and Abroad.

There is no other work in the world of which so many copies are printed annually as of the Chinese almanac. This almanac for ages past was printed at Peking, and is a monopoly of the Emperor. It not only predicts the weather, but notes the days that are reckoned lucky or unlucky for commencing any undertaking, for applying remedies in diseases, for marrying and for burying.

The number of craters on the moon's surface is very large. A large lunar map by Schmidt, published in 1878, includes about 32,000 of these formations, some of which are very deep. They are surrounded by ramparts, or walls raised above the general level. The mountains are proportionately high; one peak, named Newton, has an elevation of 24,000 feet. There are also ring mountains, varying from ten to fifteen miles in diameter.

A man living on the banks of the Penobscot announced recently that he had invented a water bicycle with which he should cross the Atlantic. He conveyed the idea that his discovery would demonstrate that man's muscle could surpass steam in navigating the ocean. He started from Bangor on his around the world trip. To the astonishment of the bystanders his machine floated, though but slowly, and not in obedience to the helm. By superhuman exertion the inventor propelled his machine as far as Bucksport, where it was left as a monument of blasted hopes.

The town crier of Nantucket, old Billy Clark, is really one of the attractions of the place, and is looked upon by visitors as a link joining the present and the past. It is his duty to "cry" not only advertisements, but general news of the day, which he obtains when the steamer arrives from the mainland. His idea of his own importance is large, and if any one should suggest to him that he give up his duties and permit more modern ideas to prevail, he would look upon it as an insult not only to his dignity, but to the dignity of the whole island.

The reason why an intoxicated man sees double is because the nerve centres are changed by the action of alcoholic poison. There is a want of harmony in the action of the muscles which move the eyeballs, and consequently, instead of both eyes being focussed simultaneously on an object, one eye receives an impression independantly of the other. The two impressions are communicated to the brain, and the object is therefore seen twice. The inflamed condition of and loss of energy in the brain-centres from overdoses of alcohol also account for the staggering gait of an intoxicated man.

A remarkable bird's nest is preserved in the Museum of National History at Soleure, Switzerland. There are a number of clockmaking shops at Soleure, and in the windows of these shops there are found lying disused or broken springs of clocks. One of these clockmakers noticed a bird's nest of peculiar appearance in a tree in his yard. He examined it and found that a pair of wagtails had built a nest entirely of clock springs. After the feathered architects had reared their brood, the finder presented the nest to the museum, where it is preserved as a striking illustration of the skill of birds in turning their surroundings to advantage.

A "baseball service" was held by a sensational preacher named Ford in the town of St. Louis, Central Michigan, last Sunday. The church was decorated with a profusion of all the implements used in playing baseball, and in his sermon the minister compared features of the game with phases of life. He spoke of the pitcher's nerve, and likened him to the Christian soldier; said that the first base was meditation, the second conviction, the third repentance, and the home plate heaven; dilated on the qualities of the batsman, the catcher and the shortstop, but, to the disgust of the cranks in the audience, utterly ignored the umpire and the rooters.

Beware of Ointments for Catarrh that contain Mercury,

as mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering it through the mucous surfaces. Such articles should never be used except on prescriptions from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do is tenfold to the good you can possibly derive from them. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, O., contains no mercury, and is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. In buying Hall's Catarrh Cure be sure you get the genuine. It is taken internally, and made in Toledo, Ohio, by F. J. Cheney & Co. Testimonials free.

Sold by Druggists, price 75c. per bottle.

Our Young Folks.

IN A GARDEN.

BY A. B. D.

"TAKE hold of my hand, Trix—that way, and walk slowly at first. You'll soon be able to go alone."

Trix was walking on the low iron railing that divided the flower beds from the lawn, her cousin Leslie holding her fast by the hand, and helping to balance her.

"Do you know, Trix, that this was the way that Blondin, the great tight-rope walker, first learned to do such wonderful things? His mother used to set him on a railing when he was a little boy, and teach him to balance himself."

"You try now, Leslie," said Trix, jumping to the ground.

Leslie Ford got on the railing, and balancing himself with his outstretched arms, walked along it quite steadily for about a dozen yards.

"Why, you'll get as clever as Blondin, Leslie, if you go on like that."

"Oh, I only do it for fun," Leslie replied, laughing. "I don't want to be a tight-rope walker. I'm going to be a captain, you know, and have a schooner, and sail to the islands, like Uncle Lawrence."

At that moment Leslie's terrier Pounce jumped up from where he was lying close by, and rushed excitedly down the garden towards the creek which flowed at the foot of the garden at Euroma.

"What's Pounce up to now, I wonder?" said Leslie. "He's always getting excited about something."

"I'll go and see," said Trix.

"If you'd wait for me at the bridge, I'd get my rod and have a try for gudgeon."

Trix followed Pounce, and Leslie entered the house. Euroma was the name of Mr. Ford's "run," or sheep station.

Beatrice Marshall and her mother had come up from Sydney to spend a few weeks with their country relatives. The time was September, the Australian spring; the garden was a lovely foam of fruit blossom, and the bush, or forest, was just as beautiful with the yellow wattle and the white clematis.

In a few minutes Leslie came out of the house again, rod in hand. The little creek that flowed past the foot of the garden, over a bed of yellow sand, and between banks bordered with tall brown bulrushes and Indian shot, contained plenty of small silver-coated fish, which Australian boys call "gudgeon," though they are not quite the same as the fish that bear that name in America.

Leslie ran down the middle walk of the garden that crossed the creek, he beheld a sight that made him quicken his pace to a run. Trix stood on the other side of the bridge, in an attitude of the greatest terror, her face blanched white, and trembling in every limb. Beside her stood Pounce, also trembling visibly, his hair erect, and his eyes starting from his head as he gazed at an object on the bridge. That object was a long black snake that lay midway on the bridge.

For a moment the sight almost took away Leslie's breath, and his heart leaped up in his mouth. It was not the first time he had seen a snake by any means, but he had never been brought face to face with a situation exactly like the present; and he was only a boy, and not a big one.

The snake was rearing itself, and slowly undulating its long sinuous body, neither advancing nor retreating. Its tongue was thrust out, and oscillated this way and that with the motions of the reptile's body. Its eyes were fastened upon Trix and Pounce. The little girl stood transfixed with terror, rooted to the ground, unable, it seemed, to move hand or foot. But a trembling cry broke from her lips—

"Oh, Leslie, Leslie!" was all she could utter.

Escape for Trix was quite cut off, for there was only a space of about a dozen yards behind her, and then a fence, too high for her to climb at any time, divided the garden from the paddocks beyond. She was hemmed in on all sides.

For a moment or two, I say, Leslie felt his nerve and his heart shake, but with a big gulp he choked back the tightness that had risen in his throat, shut his lips hard, and then opened them to say one sentence.

"Don't be afraid, Trix."

Leslie had never killed a snake yet, but he had seen a good many killed by his father and the men about the station, and knew exactly how to proceed. The thing was to keep a cool head and a steady hand and eye.

Leslie's fishing rod was a home-made one; he had, in fact, made it himself. The top joint consisted of a long piece of cane, that could be slipped out in a moment. Leslie now unfastened it; it was exactly what he wanted, for the cane was pliable and bent easily, while at the same time it was tough and strong. It was just the sort of weapon for dealing with a snake.

Grasping the cane firmly in his hand, Leslie drew near the snake, approaching it from the side, which he knew to be the best method of attack. The reptile was now advancing a little, coiling and uncoiling. Leslie waited until the creature was extended at full length, and so presented the fairest mark for a stroke.

As he raised his arm for the blow the snake turned its head slightly, and directed its glittering venomous eyes upon Leslie. Had the boy been subjected to that ugly look for a few moments longer, it might possibly have shaken his nerves again, and unsteadied his arm. But the stroke was already descending, and Leslie brought down the cane with all his strength upon the body of the snake.

The blow fell just a little below the neck, fair on the spot at which Leslie aimed; and this he knew to be the most vulnerable part in a snake's body. The reptile lay for a moment limp and motionless beneath the stroke, then it began to undulate slightly again, but the next instant Leslie had brought the cane down a second time upon its spine. The snake gave a spasmodic shudder and lay quite still. Leslie knew it was dead.

He now looked up quickly at Trix. She was standing in the same position as before, watching the scene with dilated eyes. But now Leslie saw her totter to one side. He sprang across the dead snake, and caught his cousin just in time to save her fall. Trix did not speak nor look up, and her eyes were closed. She had fainted.

Pounce seemed to comprehend what had happened. He gave one look at Leslie and Trix, another at the dead snake, and then made for the house, barking loudly. Springing across the verandah, he entered the sitting-room by one of the open windows.

Mr. and Mrs. Ford, with Trix's mother, were in the room, the two ladies engaged in writing letters, Mr. Ford busy over some Sydney papers that had just arrived. The violent barking of the dog, and his more than usually excited manner, suggested to Mr. Ford and the ladies that something had happened outside.

All three rose and followed Pounce, who ran barking down the garden again. A few minutes brought them in sight of Leslie and Trix. The boy was still supporting his cousin, and endeavoring vainly to carry her to the house.

Mr. Ford ran up, and lifted Trix in his arms, at the same time giving a glance of some surprise at the snake.

"You killed it, Leslie?" he questioned.

"Yes, father. It must have come out of that clump of reeds, I think."

"They're getting much too thick here; we must have some of them cut down. But you've settled your first snake very cleverly, my boy. The black snake, as I daresay you know, is one of the deadliest we have, but he and all his tribe are getting rare hereabout, I am glad to say."

The two ladies now came up. Mr. Ford carried Trix quickly into the house, and placed her upon a sofa. Her face was bathed with cold water, and the little girl soon revived. On opening her eyes, she looked round her in a dazed way, then she looked at Leslie and said slowly—

"I think I could have walked along the rail quite steadily, Leslie, but a horrid snake crawled right under my feet, and I was so frightened that I fell off."

She was mixing up events a little, you see; but perhaps, after what had happened, that was no great wonder.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY.—Stories of mistaken identity are plentiful enough, but they are also amusing, so that there is still excuse for telling them. A gentleman in this vicinity, one morning recently, went to a barber and was shaved smoothly and nicely.

Returning home, he found that during his absence his twin brother had arrived from California, travel-stained and unshaven. The traveler was directed to the same barber's shop, and thither he went. Seating himself in the big chair, he waited for the barber's services. That functionary, however, while regarding the visitor with surprise, made no sign of approaching him.

For five minutes the traveler sat in silence, and then, his patience being exhausted, he inquired with some asperity: "What in the deuce are you waiting for? Can't a man get shaved in this shop?"

"What's the joke?" responded the barber. "I've just shaved you."

"Much you did!" retorted the customer. "Look at my face."

The barber looked with astonishment at the stiff black beard of a week's growth, felt of it to assure himself that his eyes were not deceiving him, and at length burst out: "If you can raise a beard like that in twenty minutes you'd better go into the mattress business, and get the hair off your own chin!"

HOW POSTAGE STAMPS ARE MADE.—The design of the stamp is engraved on steel, and, in printing, plates are used on which two hundred stamps have been engraved. Two men are kept at work covering these with colored inks and passing them to a man and girl, who are printing them on hand presses.

Three of these little squads are employed all the time. After the small sheets of paper containing two hundred printed stamps are dried enough, they are sent into another room and gummed. The gum used for this purpose is a peculiar composition, made of the powder of dried potatoes and other vegetables mixed with water.

After having been again dried, this time on little racks fanned by steam power for about an hour, they are put between sheets of pasteboard and pressed in hydraulic presses capable of apply a weight of two thousand tons.

The next thing is to cut the sheet in two; each sheet of course, when cut, containing one hundred stamps. This is done by a girl with a large pair of sheers, cutting by hand being preferred to that done by machinery, which would destroy too many stamps.

Next they are pressed once more, and then packed, labelled and stowed away, to be sent out to the various offices when ordered. If a single stamp is torn or in any way mutilated, the whole sheet of one hundred stamps is burned.

Not less than five hundred thousand stamps are said to be burned from this cause every week. The greatest care is taken in counting the sheets of stamps to guard against pilfering by employes, and it is said that during the past twenty years not a single sheet has been lost in this way.

MARVELLOUS.—There is a Brahmin in Bombay who has been lately giving various audiences some startling indications of his abnormal strength of memory and extraordinary facility in making mental computations.

This man, to remember whose high-sounding and extensive name is in itself a triumph of memory, is nearly seventy years of age. While seated at a table engaged in playing chess, in which he is generally successful, he plays a game of cards with another opponent, explains different passages in Sanskirt to a third, counts the grains of wheat thrown at him by a fourth, works out in his head the extraction of the cube root of a large number, multiplies a number of thirteen figures with one of twelve figures, and solves a primary equation with two unknown quantities. These eight operations, incredible though it may seem, he carries out simultaneously.

He is, moreover, capable of solving in five minutes very involved arithmetical problems, almost invariably requiring five hours for their solution, and he very rarely makes a mistake in anything he attempts. It has been rumored that this prodigy purposes to visit Europe and gives performances in various countries.

HAVE A GOOD BREAKFAST.—"The foreign idea of a light breakfast has become very popular in this country," said a prominent physician the other day, "but doctors are beginning to inveigh against it, and with considerable show of reason, as they point out that during the night occurs one's longest fast."

"It should certainly be broken by something more than a roll and coffee since it ushers in the hours of hardest work for all our men and most of our women.

"The rolls and coffee are not fit preparation for such laborious toil. They may do for a nation of idlers, but not for busy men and women.

"An intelligent person needs no doctor to tell him when he is hungry, and the best time for a man to eat is when the man is hungry, even if it is late at night.

"It is the empty stomach, and not the comfortably full one, that makes people unhappy."

Buckingham's Dye for the Whiskers can be applied when at home, and is uniformly successful in coloring a brown or black. Hence its great popularity.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Brides in Australia are pelted with rose leaves.

Noah Webster spent seventeen years on his dictionary.

Horses and cattle in Australia are branded by electricity.

It is said that people who sleep with their mouths shut live the longest.

Up to forty years ago the Japanese were vaccinated on the tip of the nose.

The cornet player should scarcely be referred to as a horny handed son of toil.

Rocking cradles for babies were used by the Egyptians many centuries before Christ.

Platinum wires made white-hot by electric currents are now used as saws for felling trees.

Papier-mache shoes for horses have been recently introduced, with, it is said, gratifying results.

Over 400 patents have been taken out in England for the manufacture of paper, and more than 500 in this country.

The share of land falling to each inhabitant of the globe, if it were all equally divided, would be about 23¾ acres.

A pasture in Texas, owned by Mr Warshum, contains 50,000 acres, and has one line of fence twenty-three miles long.

"Boo," the word used to frighten children, is a corruption of "Bah," the name of a Goth famous for his brutal cruelty.

Pope Leo XIII. is a good chess player, and, when his health permits, frequently enjoys a game with his friend, Pater Gulia.

Walter Besant is authority for the statement that there are fifty novelists in England who have incomes of $5000 a year or over.

The impecunious Prince of Wales won $40,000 on the turf last season, and yet has a hard struggle to keep up with the procession.

There is a miniature Indian corn grown in Brazil. The ears are no larger than a little finger, and the grains are the size of mustard seeds.

In Hungary school children have been forbidden to kiss the hands of their teachers on coming and going, on the ground of possible infection.

There are words in the Chinese language that have as many as forty different meanings, each depending on the intonation used in pronouncing it.

English laborers, taken the country over, average about $4.86 a week, from which they are expected to board and clothe themselves and their families.

Probably the most extraordinary journal in the world is published weekly in Athens. Its contents are written entirely in verse, even to the advertisements.

The people of Great Britain consume less tobacco per head than those of any other civilized country—only twenty-three ounces to each inhabitant per annum.

It is said that there are millions of Chinese in the interior of China who are totally ignorant of the fact that a great war has been carried on with Japan.

Every Chinese implement has its deity: there is a god of knives, another of spades, another of hatchets, another of swords. Animals are likewise protected in this way.

The doctor of a London lunatic asylum has engaged a couple of East Perthshire bagpipers as warders. The new results are to play to the lunatics as a part of their duties.

Crazy King Otto, of Bavaria, imagines he is an animal, and in a state of nudity roams about on all fours in his spooky palace. As a royal roisterer he must be a howling success.

In an old rat's nest found in the chimney of an old house at Lignorier, Pa., last week, were some papers bearing the date 1770, and a Mexican dollar of 1774, and a Mexican quarter of 1772.

After January 1st, 1896, the Laclede Gas Light Company, of St. Louis, will furnish gas at 80 cents per thousand for heating and $1 per thousand for illumination. The prices are now $1.25 for either kind.

Robinson Crusoe's musket is offered for sale in a collection of curiosities in Edinburgh that includes a hundred and twenty instruments of torture, chiefly Spanish, and relics of Gustavus Adolphus, of Sweden.

What is believed to be the largest mirror in the world has just been set up in a New York hotel. It is 158 inches square, and was made in France. It cost $5000, and two days and a night were consumed in setting it up.

One provision in a new ordinance for the regulation of bicyle riding which is under consideration by the San Francisco City Council prohibits bicyclists from carrying in their machines any child under the age of six years.

One dollar for nearly a year of very hard work was all that the crew of the whaling bark Lydia received when they were paid off in San Francisco last week. They worked for their food and a share in the profits of the cruise, and this season has been the worst whaling season in many years.

HE LOVES THEE NOT.

BY G. N.

Oh, throbbing heart, he loves thee not;
Cease this wild beating—'tis in vain—
He folds another to his breast;
Then stay thy restlessness and pain.

At times the fever drives me mad,
The air is scorching, and for breath
I pant; when soon again of life
I'm weary, and I long for death.

Oh, panting heart, thy feverish thirst
Thou canst not in his love e'er slake!
Oh, bursting heart, I cannot stay
Thy throbbings wild—no, thou must break!

TALENTS OF ROYALTY.

Music seems to possess especial charms for princes and princesses of royal blood, and a very extensive orchestra might be easily formed from the massed royal families of Europe, though the range of instruments would be far from complete.

The German Emperor has a pleasant baritone voice which he likes to hear very much. He is devoted to music and is especially a devotee of Wagner. The royal evening very frequently concludes with a concert, in which both the Emperor and the Empress take part—for the Empress is a fairly skilled violinist. The Crown Prince and Prince Albert have inherited their parents' musical tastes, and play admirably upon the violin.

The Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha is a good second-rate performer on the violin. He has frequently taken part in concerts, and sometimes played a solo part at Plymouth, at the Colston Hall, Bristol, and in London. His daughters are all musical, and the Crown Princess of Roumania is far more skilful as a violinist.

The Duke's son-in-law, the Grand Duke of Hesse, is not only a skilful executant, but he composes well for the piano, and has orchestrated several of his own compositions with striking success. Two of the Grand Duke's aunts, the Princess of Wales and Princess Beatrice, perform very creditably on the piano.

Princess Beatrice is almost as devoted to music as she is to theatricals, and it is mainly owing to her tastes that so many of the musicians of the day have received "commands" to appear at Court and perform before the Queen. In such a concert, however, as we have imagined above, Prince Christian Victor would be able to give a pretty accompaniment on the flute, while the Duchess of Albany would contribute a solo on the harp.

Outside the wide circle of the Queen of England's posterity there is the Queen of Italy, who is a composer of some merit. She is very fond of the piano, and will sit for hours improvising sweet little melodies.

The Princess of Monaco inherits a large measure of the musical talent of her race. She is a brilliant pianoforte player, and at her receptions given to the leading visitors and residents of the tiny principality, she will sometimes delight her guests by exhibiting her skill.

The Queen of Roumania in earlier days, before her health gave way, possessed a full rich voice, and was very fond of singing the airs of Handel and Bach. She also played on the organ, and her favorite time for this pastime was the hour before dinner. During her illness music has been a great solace to her.

The Countess of Flanders is fond of improvising concerts in her own salon, at the Castle of Amerois, when she herself presides at the harmonium, and her youngest daughter, Princess Josephine, performs on the piano. The Countess is passionately devoted to music, and is a warm patron of all musicians who come her way.

In the Russian royal family the Grand Duke Vladimir, brother of the late Czar, is the artist. He is devoted to literature and music, and as President of the Academy of Fine Arts at St. Petersburg is interested in every artistic movement.

The widow of the late Czar plays as well as sings, and at the family gatherings in Denmark, she and the Princess of Wales invariably contribute when there is a musical evening.

The royal authors are not so numerous as the musicians. Queen Victoria's "Life in the Highlands," is rather an interesting picture of royalty at home than a contribution to literature.

The most widely known of royal writers is the Queen of Roumania, who, under the nom de plume of "Carmen Sylva," has written some charming volumes of "Thoughts," novels, plays, and collections of romantic tales called "Contes des Pelesch."

King Oscar of Sweden has achieved considerable success by his history of "Charles XII. of Sweden," and he has made exceedingly scholarly translations of "Goethe's "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister" into his native tongue. He is also a poet of no mean order, for his sonnets have been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and his nautical songs set to his own music have a great vogue in the Swedish navy.

King Oscar is also an artist of some power, but the member of the Swedish family who shines most in the pictorial art is Prince Eugene, who studied for more than a year in the studios at Paris, under an assumed name.

The Archduchess Stephanie of Austria, widow of the Crown Prince Rudolf, has written a bright narrative of her travels in the Orient, and a very poetical account of the history and topography of the Island of Lacroma, which has been issued with illustrations reproduced from sketches by her own pencil.

Queen Natalie of Servia has written a drama called "La Mere," which is a clever statement of her view of the private quarrels of the Servian Royal Family, but has little dramatic merit.

Prince Henri of Orleans, the explorer, has not only written a very learned account of his travels, but has contributed articles to French magazines on Indo-Siamese questions at once geographical, poetical, and aggressive.

Among the royal artists, using the word in its stricter sense, the most conspicuous is the Princess Waldemar of Denmark. She has a special gift for depicting scenes from animal life, and competent judges have declared that if she had been born with necessity to urge her on she might have rivalled Rosa Bonheur. She inherits her talent from her mother, the Duchess de Chartres, who paints admirably, but has confined her skill entirely to the illumination of religious books, which she performs with great delicacy.

Grains of Gold.

When in doubt, tell the truth.

Little fish will bite at any kind of bait.

Sin is a detective that never gives up or turns back.

Three may keep a secret, if two of them are dead.

Our hardest battles are those we fight with ourselves.

Whoever lives a lie does it with a sword over his head.

Only those can sing in the dark who have a light in the heart.

It is foolish to do nothing because we cannot do everything at once.

Error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left to combat it.

It is a bad day for a Christian, when he begins to think he has all the religion he needs.

The man who gets rich at the expense of his conscience, pays too much for his money.

Revenge is the basest passion of the heart, and to gratify it is as low down as man can get.

Self-denial is the last thing some people intend to practice when they start out to be religious.

Charity is a blessed privilege. It lifts poor human nature up to the level of the angels, and sheds the light of Heaven around our pathway.

Femininities.

The newest prodigy in New York is a 10-year-old negro girl, who has had great success as a preacher.

It may be more honorable to tell a man his faults to his face, but it is safer to tell them to his neighbor.

It is said to be a fact that Paderewski is constantly receiving letters from total strangers asking for locks of hair.

Emperor Francis Joseph has accorded permission to women to study medicine in the universities of Hungary.

Tatterdon Torn: "I had an awful dream last night." Rollingstone Nomoss: "Wot was it?" Tatterdon Torn: "I dreamed I was swimmin'."

The Princess of Wales is the most expert royal photographer. Second may be placed the Duchess of Connaught and third the Duchess of Fife.

Says Julia Ward Howe: "Sixty years ago I was 16. If I knew as much now as I thought I did then I might have something very instructive to tell."

A lamp should be filled quite full every day, and thus used, will burn one wick many times as long as if it were only filled with oil when absolutely required.

People have wondered how Queen Victoria managed to keep track of all the royal birthdays. At last the secret is out. A secretary attends to all such matters.

For several years a woman has driven the stage between Manceiona and Bellaire, Mich. She handles the reins as well as any man in that region, and has never had trouble with stage robbers.

The Princess Maud of Wales, who is betrothed to Prince Karl of Denmark, can milk a cow and make butter. She learned these useful arts on her father's dairy farm at Sandringham House.

The Sultan of Turkey has been the means of establishing 50,000 schools throughout his Empire, not only for boys, but for girls also, which is a striking departure from the traditional usage of his race.

When an experienced mother picks up a strange baby, the first thing she always does is to say: "Oh, you little darling, you!" and the next thing is to take out her handkerchief and wipe the infant's nose.

"I wish them things wasn't so high priced," said Mrs. Jason, as she looked longingly at some chrysanthemums. "I think I'll raise some next year myself. They ought to be jist lovely to sprinkle clothes with."

He: "So you and the cook have had a misunderstanding? What was the trouble?" She: "Cook threatened to leave because I have too much company, and I threatened to discharge her because she had too many followers."

A domineering man said to his wife: "Remember, my dear, that you are the weaker vessel." "That may be so," she retorted; "but I'll take good care that you shan't forget that the weaker vessel may have the stronger spirit in it!"

Ex-Empress Eugenie has recently deposited her will with a prominent London attorney, in which, true to her pledge, she has left a legacy to each of the 5834 male persons of France born on the birthday of her son, Prince Louis.

In 1995.—Nell Newwoman: "Was that penny social at your church a success?" Bell Update: "No! Everybody was expected to give a penny for each year of his or her age, and none of the dear men gave more than eighteen or twenty."

Four professors of the University of California, after listening, as judges, to a public debate on the New Woman movement, voted solidly against the New Woman, deciding that the movement "is not for the best interests of the race."

The daily income of the principal rulers of Europe is as follows: The Czar of Russia, $30,000; the Sultan of Turkey, $20,000; the Emperor of Germany, $10,000; the King of Italy, $8000; the Queen of England, $8000; the King of the Belgians, $2000.

A lady graduate, being out in the country, went into the stable of a farm-house. "Dear me! how close the poor cows are crowded together," she remarked. "Yes, mum, but we have to do that." "Why so?" "So they will give condensed milk."

Peddler: "I wish to call your attention to a pretty and indestructible paper-weight." Merchant: "Why, they look like biscuits." Peddler: "So they are. My wife discovered the secret of their manufacture, and I've had it patented."

In the Boehmerwald, near Pilsen, two gypsies fought a duel with knives for a girl, in her presence. She looked on the fight with great interest, and without interfering, till one stabbed the other to the heart, when she drew a revolver and shot the victor through the head. She staid by the bodies till arrested.

Mary Ellen Lease was to lecture at Van Buren, Ark., but because the lecture committee did not meet her with a carriage and escort her from the depot she cancelled her engagement and declared she would not lecture anywhere in Arkansas. Mrs. Lease is a strong minded woman and her temper appears to be a match for her mind.

Masculinities.

The Marquis of Salisbury is fond of fat mutton chops.

In England credit over the counter of a public house is not recognized in law.

John Ruskin never drinks wine or spirits, but consumes large quantities of ale.

Princess Maud of Wales has carved a meerschaum pipe for her betrothed, Prince Karl of Denmark.

Senator McMillin has purchased an estate of seventy eight acres near the ocean at Manchester, N. H.

Dr. Johnson is reported to have said that a second marriage was the "triumph of hope over experience."

The Sultan of Turkey is enabled to buy new bonnets for his harem frequently, as his daily income is $20,000.

Governor Stone, of Missouri, recently commissioned as notary public a member of the Order of Sisters of Charity, in St. Louis.

Throw a piece of meat among bears and a purse of gold among men, and which will behave most courageously—the men or the beasts?

A tablet to Mary, Queen of Scots, has been erected at Peterborough, the money to pay for it having been collected from English women named Mary.

The family bicycle has been a foregone conclusion for some time, and has now arrived. A California man comes to the front with a wheel for nine.

The latest suicides at Monte Carlo were Countess Jourdes and her daughter, who poisoned themselves after losing $60,000 at the gaming tables in a week.

In Sweden a bride has her pockets filled with bread. It is supposed that every piece she gives to the poor on her way to church averts misfortune.

"You know that dollar Hardy owed me?" "Yes." "I got it out of him at last." "Is it possible!" "Yes; sent him a package of brickbats by express with $1 due on it."

Lady Yarmouth asked Garrick one day why Love was always represented as a child? He replied, "Because Love never reaches the age of wisdom and experience."

Dr. Thomas Flournoy has just died at Richmond, Va., and the public is asked to believe that his death resulted from wounds received in a bowie knife duel 41 years ago.

Some lady puts one dollar's worth of material and two dollars' worth of toil into a silk workbag that sells for forty cents. And the dear creatures call that "making money."

Statistics show that on an average every man, woman and child in New York city—counting in the police and the Prohibitionists—drinks two and a half barrels of beer annually.

The new Georgia road law requires all males between the ages of 15 to 50 to work on the roads five days in each year or to pay to the county road fund $1 a day for each day not spent in such work.

The following is a copy of an advertisement which appeared in a foreign paper: "Made their escape, a husband's affections. They disappeared immediately on seeing his wife with her hands and face unwashed at breakfast."

Dr. Carines, of Atlanta, has just trepanned the skull of one of Hagenbeck's lions. Two of the animals had a fight on the Atlanta Exposition's Midway, and one threw the other against a cage with force enough to fracture its skull.

"I want to buy a make-up box," said the young married man. "A make-up box?" the confectioner echoed; "we don't keep theatrical supplies." "I mean a box of candy to take home to my wife. I promised to be home three hours ago."

Some clever fellows have invented a new kind of ink, called "love-letter ink." It is a sure preventive against all cases of "breach of promise," as the ink fades away and leaves the sheet blank in about four weeks after being written upon.

The Governor of the Punjab, in India, has ordered that half the prisoners in the jails there be kept on fresh water, and half on boiled, records being kept to see whether the boiled water has any effect in the way of preventing ordinary sickness.

In one of the latest days of Fox, the conversation in company once turned upon the comparative wisdom of the French and English character. "The Frenchman," it was observed, "delights himself with the present; the Englishman makes himself anxious about the future. Is not the Frenchman the wiser?" "He may be the merrier," said Fox; "but did you ever hear of a savage who did not buy a mirror instead of a telescope?"

To dream of a millstone around your neck is a sign of what you may expect if you get an extravagant wife. When a young lady dreams of a coffin it betokens that she should instantly discontinue lacing her stays lightly, and always go warmly and thickly shod in wet weather. To dream of fire is a sign that—if you are wise—you will see that the lights in your house are out before you go to bed. To dream that your nose is red at the tip, is an intimation that you had better leave off brandy and water.

Latest Fashion Phases.

A stylish coat in powder-blue cloth, is trimmed with beaver fur. It is tight-fitting, with a fluted basque at the back, while the front of the coat is cut in a short point, with rounded basques, thus producing the effect of a jacket front. The double breasted front is fastened from the bust to the waist by three coin buttons. The large beaver collar extends to the bust. The leg 'o-mutton sleeves trimmed at the waist by a gauntlet fur cuff. This serviceable jacket is lined with a blue and white check silk.

A ravissante coat, is in black velvet, trimmed with fine beaded jet, petunia velvet, black satin ribbon and black ostrich feathers. It is snugly fitted, with fluted basques cut in deep points, which are edged with the feather trimming. Large pointed revers extend from the shoulders to the waist line, and are edged by a narrow band of the beaded jet. The centre of the front is adorned by the two rows of feather trimming. The flaring collar is covered with jet and surrounded by black ostrich tips. The "foot ball" sleeves is made of petunia velvet, with five slashings of black velvet, which are edged with jet and extending to the wrist, forming a black velvet cuff, ornamented with jet. A band of the feathers embellishes the sleeve at the hand. Three loops and a knot of black satin ribbon are arranged on either shoulder and fall on the sleeve. It is lined throughout with petunia prismatic silk.

A very chick coat is made of golden brown Melton cloth, with a magnificent collar of cut chinchilla fur. The fronts are faced inside with pink velvet, while there is in addition a waistcoat of ivory duchesse satin, bordered with a narrow galon of white satin, with a chintz embroidery. The skirt of the coat forms a long point at the back, where it falls in a graceful cascade drapery, which is as novel as it is pretty and elegant.

A very smart coat is made of black cloth, trimmed with marten fur. It is arranged with double-breasted fronts and a short fluted skirt. This cozy-looking winter coat has revers collar of marten fur, and is fastened by two handsome pearl buttons. The large gigot sleeve is quite plain. The lining is a pretty broche in pale blue and silver.

A very attractive jacket is made of black velvet, with a close-fitting full-skirted back and a half fitting front. A broad box-plait of the velvet embellishes the centre of the front from the neck to the edge. A rever collar, with a square cornered back and form top (which can be worn as a turn-down collar), is edged with mink-tail fur. The sleeves are cut leg-o mutton shape, and are entirely void of adonnment. The lining used for this coat is pale blue satin.

A charming evening cloak is made of an exquisite pompadour broche, with raised velvet flowers in the most delicate shades imaginable; pale tones of blue, pink and green are harmoniously blended on a background of opalescent satin, which is ivory-white faintly shot with apple-green. This swell cloak has a wide insertion of rich green glace velvet on either side of the front and back, and on either side directly under the sleeves. It is arranged in full folds and mounted on a pointed yoke of the green velvet. The high, flaring velvet collar is ornamented at the back by a plaited, fan-shaped bow of the broche and velvet, while at the front is a bow of salmon-pink silk. The huge bishop sleeve is drawn into a band of green velvet, which is adorned at the upper edge by a ruffle of the broche. The cuffs are enriched by loops of green velvet and bows of salmon-pink silk. It is lined throughout with salmon-pink silk.

A chic opera cape is of white Thibet fur. The square yoke of royal blue velvet, richly embroidered with jewelled passementerie and iridescent beads, in bronze and green, is cut in two points on either side of the front and back. A deep flounce of the fur is mounted on the velvet yoke, being quite short at the back and sides, but descending below the waist in the front. The high collar is entirely composed of the Thibet fur. The lining of this cape is a handsome broche in blue and pink.

Another attractive cape is made of white satin, lined with green glace silk. It is elaborately trimmed with a transparent embroidery of black lace, enriched by steel paillettes, which allow the green lining to show through the lace. Thick kiltings of black chiffon adorn the lower edge and either side of the front, while a ruche of the same ornaments the neck, in which are nestled numerous pink roses.

A beautiful long circular cloak is made of broche cloth in old blue on a pearl-gray ground. It is made with a wide watteau plait at the back, and falls round the figure in rich, deep folds. Over this is a very novel cape in blue velvet, which is rather short on the shoulders and falls in a series of coquille folds down the centre of the front and back, ending in long points that reach to within twelve inches of the edge. The shoulders are embellished by large bows of the velvet. The high velvet collar is plaited at the back, and is bordered with a narrow band of sable fur. This cloak is lined with pearl-gray silk.

A pretty evening cape is made of a handsome broche in pale pink and green. It is finished with a very deep square collar of the broche, which passes over the shoulders and forms a sailor collar at the back, and is edged both front and back with a chicoree ruche of pink glace silk shot with pale green. The neck is adorned by a similar ruche. The lining selected for this cape is quilted pink satin.

A very swell long evening cloak is made of vivid rose-pink verglas moire. The back is arranged with a full Watteau plait, while the front is mounted on a square yoke, which is bordered with ermine fur. A band of the fur ornaments either side of the front, extending from the neck to the edge. The high flaring collar is edged with ermine fur. The very large bishop sleeve is finished at the wrist by a narrow cuff edged with fur.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

When grease is spilled on the kitchen floor cold water should be poured over it immediately; the grease will then harden and can be easily scraped away when firm. If it is not treated in this fashion it sinks into the floor and repeated scrubbings fail to remove it. While this is true for grease, it does not do with oils.

The really best method for cleaning mirrors and windows is to rub them with a paste of whiting and water. When this dries polish with dry chamois and remove the powder.

A little alcohol in cold water also gives a brilliant polish. Soapsuds should never be used.

If grease becomes spilled upon matting apply powdered French chalk and benzine. Cover the grease with the chalk and sprinkle lightly with the benzine. When the latter has evaporated brush off the chalk and the spot will vanish also.

Put new flannel into clean, cold water and let it remain for a week, changing the water frequently. Wash well in warm water, using a little soap to remove the down. Flannel thus washed never hardens or shrinks.

In the cellar several rules are to be observed.

First—Use plenty of lime and also charcoal, both of which disinfect and purify.

Second—Admit fresh air daily, no matter how cold the weather.

Third—Do not hoard rubbish in the cellar.

Fourth—Have a furnace with a cold air box. The heated air which goes upstairs is much more healthful if drawn from out doors into the furnace that if supplied from the cellar.

A cement for mending bricks consists of powdered soapstone mixed with an equal quantity of common salt and wet to a paste with cold water. This hardens and lasts well, as the sandstone is fireproof.

To clear wall paper use bread about a day old. If the paper is only dusty, dust it and rub it with with a soft yarn mop. Take even downward strokes with either of these methods.

Borax is excellent for many purposes. Use refined borax as a washing powder in the proportion of one large handful to ten gallons of boiling water. This saves soap and makes the clothes very white. For laces, cambrics, etc, a little more borax is used. Being a neutral salt it does not injure linen in the slightest particular.

For the toilet table it is excellent, making the water soft and pleasant.

It is good as a dentrifrice and for the hair, and is used with tartaric acid and bicarbonate of soda to make a cooling beverage.

To prevent lamp wicks from smoking, soak in vinegar and then thoroughly dry them.

A lamp chimney should never be touched with water. A few drops of alcohol will remove the smoky effect and make it bright—and it should then be polished with a chamois skin.

Dishes should be arranged for washing in the following order: Glass, silver, cups and saucers, plates and other dishes. Wash the cleanest first and only a few at a time. Two pans, one for washing and one for rinsing should be used. Plates should be well scraped before washing, and dish rags and towels kept very clean and sweet.

Wooden bread boards are not healthful, being an excellent resting place for microbes innumerable. A marble one is always best.

When the voice is at all husky the throat and chest should be bathed two or three times a day with cold water, and afterward rubbed briskly with a towel until the skin is a perfect glow. A compress covered with cold water will hasten the cure.

The use of rouge is a most pernicious habit, and one that when persistently carried out works havoc with the pores. A most harmless rouge is the juice of boiled beet root, very effectual while it lasts, but the color fades quickly.

A loose, flabby condition of the skin may be due to a bad state of health and a low state of the nerves. It will often be removed by taking a good tonic.

A wash made of a tablespoonful of alum in a pint of water will also be found good for tightening the skin, and should be wiped over the face several times a day with a soft cloth.

When the eyes are weak the lashes will frequently fall out, so that it is well to have the eyes attended to. Bathing them frequently with cold water is said to be strengthening, and it is good to add a little boracic acid to it.

Woolen blankets should be washed in warm water after having been soaked for an hour in lukewarm water, in which one and a half tablespoonfuls of ammonia are added to each pailful of water. Pound gently when washing but do not rub. Rinse three times in clean water.

A carpet stained with ink can be cleaned by squeezing lemon juice on the spot and covering with salt. Let it remain thus for several hours and wash with a flannel rag wrung out in warm water and a little ammonia.

Turpentine is the best friend housekeepers have, and a supply should always be kept on hand. It is good for burns, excellent for corns, good for rheumatism and sore throat and a quick remedy for fits or convulsions.

It drives away ants and bugs from storerooms and corners by putting a few drops on the shelves. It effectually destroys bugs and injures neither furniture nor clothing.

For cleaning paint add a spoonful to a pail of warm water. A little in the suds on wash-day makes washing easier.

Use paper for polishing purposes—the soft tissue sort for silver and old newspapers for stoves and such purposes. It can't be beat.

HOW THIEVES LIVE IN NAPLES.—The Camorra at Naples, like the Mafia in Sicily, is an organization of criminals and associates of criminals that is centuries old.

The Camorra begins its work with the infants who are abandoned by their parents or who are lent out to the impostors who beg in the streets of Naples.

These children, so runs an account of them in the London News, for the most part those of persons who are in prison, are taught to beg for the end of a cigar or soldo and infest the cafes.

In winter they sleep in holes and stables, in summer on the church steps, under archways on the benches in the public gardens. When they are six or seven years old they are instructed in begging and thieving by older children.

At ten years of age the little Camorrista, or little thief, became a cantatore (singer). He must know how to improvise a song to the girls and reply with an extemporaneous verse to the verse of a companion or of an antagonist.

In Naples there are two armies of cantatori, one belonging to the streets in the older part of the city and one to those of the west end. They constitute the neophytes of the Camorra, and compete in public, passing their examinations by night in the streets.

They choose for the subject of their chants everything that takes place in the city, and very often the object of derisive songs is an old man or a poor idiot. The better class hear these scoffs, but do not interfere, and often laugh at the wit which is scarcely ever missing.

The two bands are naturally great rivals, and once a year at least they defy each other to a series of battles in which stones are the weapons, and at the close of the fray knives too often come into play.

This practice of battles with stones among boys can be traced back as far as 1625, for at that period the Duke of Alva caused thirty "stone throwers" to be arrested in Naples

The war cry of the boys is "Aniella, Aniella," the derivation of which is not certain. After the war cry comes the challenge in the form of a verse, to which the enemy responds likewise. Then the younger boys commence the attack.

The passers-by flee, but at no great distance stand old and young men who incite the rival bands, and, if necessary, rescue one or the other of them from an arrest by the police.

Two years ago there was a famous battle of this kind in Piazza Mercato, which ended in a fight between the police and the stone throwers, during which the trams were stopped for some time. This duel ceases at the first drawing of blood. A slight scratch received by one of the members of the two parties puts an end to the battle. The wounded boy is surrounded by his friends and taken to his mother, real or adopted, to be bound up and nursed.

The songs sung by the boys have always a chorus, and generally there are two soloists, who sing a verse in turn, which is ended by a refrain sung by the chorus, a mere "Ah, oh! Ah, oh!" In poetical form these youths express the knowledge they have of the worst evils and vices of human nature, but the verses are realistic and without the least gleam of sentiment.

A DOG AND HIS MASTER.—A dog was once the cause of a representation of King Lear coming to a precipitate end. In Garrick's time dogs were not so rigorously excluded from theatres as they are nowadays; and on this particular night there happened to be a fat beadle in his wig, accompanied by a bull-dog, sitting close up against the stage.

The beadle had sat through four acts and two scenes of the fifth, but, being more affected by the heat than by Garrick's acting, had fallen into a peaceful slumber.

The point in the third scene had been reached where Lear enters with Cordelia dead in his arms, and exclaims, "Howl, howl, howl, howl! Oh, you are men of stone!" and so forth.

Garrick had deposited the prostrate Cordelia on a couch, and was proceeding with his lament, when the Duke of Albany was perceived to be choking with laughter. A moment later the Earl of Kent was similarly affected.

At the same time all the bystanders began to titter and giggle, and even King Lear himself stopped in his speech and was observed to smile.

Meanwhile the dead Cordelia opened her eyes to see what was happening, and immediately was so overcome with what she saw that she incontinently arose from her couch and hastily left the stage, closely followed by the Duke of Albany and the Earl of Kent, who were now unable any longer to control their countenances.

Yet all that had happened was merely this. The bull-dog had become interested in the progress of the play, and had got up on to his master's chair, placing his forepaws on the orchestra rail.

There he stood, very gravely and earnestly watching Garrick. Meanwhile the beadle, feeling the heat more and more, had taken off his wig, and, half awake, half asleep, had placed it on the nearest support within reach—namely, his dog's head.

The bull-dog, quite undisturbed, continued to concentrate his attention on King Lear and Cordelia; and it was the appearance of this canine spectator in a beadle's wig which upset the actors at a critical moment and nearly turned a tragedy into a comedy.

WANT OF GRATITUDE IN CHILDREN.—It is to be feared it is too frequently the case that children and very young people are utterly wanting in gratitude to their parents. They may, and generally do, love them sincerely and devotedly, and may even be willing to sacrifice themselves for them; but it never occurs to them that they have anything for which to be grateful. It seems so much a matter of course that all good things should flow to them from their parents, that they never give a thought to the source whence they are derived. It is not till the parental hand is withdrawn by death, that they discover how much they owed to those who are no more; how much they miss the tender care that can no more assist them.

Some floating soaps turn yellow and rancid. Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap does neither. The Borax in it bleaches it with age, and the odor is delightful. Try it once, use it always. Order a trial lot of your grocer. Insist on red wrappers.

Lettie's Triumph.

BY J. G. B.

"YOU must go, Allie."

"But mother—"

"But, my dear child, you need a holiday, and Lettie will expect you."

"How can I leave you, mother?"

And Allie Wentworth knelt down by her mother's easy chair, and laid her head against the arm.

Mrs. Wentworth stroked the soft brown hair framing the delicate pale face, her eyes full of fondest love.

"Foolish child! Do you expect to be always so devoted to your old worn-out mother?" she said, a quiver in her voice.

"Yes, indeed I do; and you must not talk about being old and worn out. We will grow old together."

Her mother smiled.

"Well, but that need not prevent the holiday. Martha will take care of me. You must go, dear, I command you!"

"Then I must obey," said Allie, a bright smile flashing over her face.

She was not exactly a pretty girl, but one who would be attractive and lovable through age as well as youth, for the loveliness of her nature.

She had once cherished bright dreams of love and happy marriage, like other girls; but two years before her mother had been stricken down with paralysis, and for a long time they thought she would die.

Poor Allie! It was a dark time to her, for she was the only child of a widowed mother, and they had been devoted to each other.

She gave up her work, and for weeks lived right beside that sick bed; but at last the doctors pronounced the dear invalid out of danger, and though she would never be well and strong again, the simple sparing of her life was enough to be for ever grateful for.

Henceforth Allie sternly banished romance from her mind, and went bravely and cheerfully back to the dressmaking shop; for though they had a small income, it was not sufficient for all their expenses.

Now, a letter from Lettie Harvey, an old school friend, had interrupted the sober routine of her life.

Lettie was going to be married, and urged her dear Allie to come to the wedding. She lived in a village not far from the city, and Allie did feel a wistful longing to escape for a short time to a freer atmosphere.

She would have put down the desire, and made her home duties an excuse for not accepting her friend's invitation; but her mother took the matter into her own hands, and sent her away.

Lettie was delighted to see her friend, and after telling her about her own love affair, said—

"I sent for you, not only to see me married, Lettie, dear, but also to meet the nicest fellow in the world—next to Arthur."

"Nonsense, Lettie, you know that I do not care for such as that," said Allie, flushing.

"But you ought to. Do you intend to be an old maid?"

"Yes!" firmly and decidedly.

"Cross as two sticks—sour as a crab-apple! Oh, yes, I can see you now—a wrinkled, withered little witch, with a wisp of hair about as big as my finger, and shoulders bent almost double!"

Allie laughed, stole a glance at her slender, but straight, well rounded figure, her bright, soft eyes, and youthful face—then relapsed into gravity.

"I shall never marry, Lettie."

"Why not?" impatiently.

"Because I cannot desert my mother!"

"Nobody but a brute would ask you to do that!" exclaimed Lettie, indignantly. "I am sure Roy Stuart would not."

"Who?"

"Roy Stuart."

"Is that his name?"

"Yes. What do you think of it?"

"Altogether too romantic."

"Pshaw! It is a fine name, and just suits him. He is rather large, and dark, and handsome, I think, with beautiful gray eyes. Moreover, he is good and noble. He is Arthur's best friend; and just think how nice it would be to live here near together! I am sure this pure air would strengthen your mother."

"Do hush, Lettie! You talk as though I had nothing to do but signify my willingness, and the gentleman would propose," said Allie, rising and walking to the window, somewhat disturbed.

The bride-elect turned her engagement ring round on her pretty, plump finger, a half-smile on her face.

Her school-girl friendship had survived time and absence, and she felt an unselfish desire to see her friend as happy as she herself.

"She is a tender, loving creature. She would make an adorable wife and a devoted mother. She must get that foolish notion of self sacrifice out of her head, or her life will be spoiled," mused the girl, silently.

Allie met Arthur Wootton, her friend's affianced, that evening; but not thus quietly was she destined to meet his friend.

The second day after her arrival she was persuaded to go out riding with Lettie. Now, she was not an experienced horsewoman, and unfortunately her horse had not been exercised for two or three days; and when beyond the limits of the village, he was disposed to take control.

"Pray be careful! I am afraid he will run away!" exclaimed Lettie, in alarm. "Dear me, if he should!"

"Don't mention it!" grasped Allie, growing pale, and pulling hard at the rein.

Well, he didn't exactly run away, but when they came near the banks of a river he bolted, and could not be pulled up until he stood in the middle of the ford.

His luckless rider did not stop them, for when he halted so suddenly and unexpectedly, she pitched headlong out of the saddle into the water.

It was not really a dangerous fall, but oh, how ridiculous and mortifying! There she sat in the middle of the stream, bare-headed and dripping wet, when a young man, attracted by Lettie's shrieks, hastened out of the woods, his gun in his hand.

Flinging down gun and game-bag, he waded in to the rescue of the unfortunate Allie.

"What an absurd mishap! Don't ask me to ever ride again," she said, shaking out her dripping habit.

"Thank Heaven, you are unhurt!" cried Lettie, gratefully. "And thank Roy for coming to the rescue," she added, with a flash of mischief in her eyes.

Allie glanced quickly up into the grey eyes she had heard called beautiful, then blushed deepest crimson.

That was how she met Mr. Stuart, and though she told herself it made no difference what kind of an impression she made on him; she could not think of her dishevelled, half-drowned appearance with anything but disgust.

"Gracious heavens, what a fright!" she murmured, when safe in her own room she went, girl like, to the mirror the first thing.

Determined that the second impression should be better than the first, she made a careful toilet that evening, and appeared at her brightest and best.

Mr. Stuart, who proved to be an intelligent man and agreeable as good looking, devoted himself to her entertainment in a quiet, unobtrusive way.

Lettie's wedding preparations went merrily on, and the bridegroom's best friend seemed to be deeply interested in them. He certainly called on the Harveys as often as he could, and never failed to seek out Allie.

As time passed she grew almost frightened at herself, she felt so changed, so unlike the sober-minded, resolute girl of former days.

"I am losing all the practical commonsense I have gained in two days, and going back to the romantic dreams of younger days. I must stop. I must go home," she thought, with a troubled sigh.

But Lettie married, and went away on a short tour, and still she lingered, for she could not get away from the urgent entreaties of the family to stay and help arrange Lettie and Arthur's house, and her mother wrote to her to prolong her visit.

Half laughing, half vexed, she consented.

"It seems as if the whole world has conspired against me, mother included. What would she say if she knew? But I will not be a coward and run away!" blushing furiously.

It was exciting, delightful employment furnishing a house. Sometimes she would make believe it was her own, and many sweet thoughts flitted through her mind while she helped to arrange the pretty rooms.

Mr. Stuart did his share of the work, too, and once she stood at the front door and waited for him, a bright, welcoming smile on her lips.

He sprang up the steps, and catching her hand, kissed it warmly.

"I could almost imagine this home, and you——"

But snatching her hand away, she hastily retreated to the little kitchen, where Lettie's younger sisters were putting away dishes and pots and pans.

At last it was all ready for habitation, and they went through the house a merry inspecting party, late one afternoon, but when they reached the parlor, the younger people went on out into the garden, leaving Roy and Allie alone.

A small fire had been kindled in the grate, for it was September, and frosty, and the girl sat down before it to warm her hands. She looked rather pale and fagged out, not from physical labor, but mental unrest.

Roy stood on the hearthrug near her, and when she started up, unable to endure his earnest, steadfast look any longer, he gently detained her.

"Your work and mine has been finished here, but must we part? Will you not help me arrange a home, and then be its dear mistress? Will you not marry me, Allie—be my dear, honored wife? I love you so truly, darling!"

"You have learned the lesson quickly," she said, striving hard to keep cool and composed.

"But none the less surely. My dearest, you will say yes?"

"No, no!" she cried, sharply, finding it terribly hard to resist his tenderness. "I have resolved never to marry. My mother is an invalid. She needs me, and my duty is to remain with her."

"Yes, I know all your trials. I only ask to share your duties, not to take you from them. Your mother shall be my mother, and together we will take care of her. I am a lonely fellow, Allie. I have no mother."

"No, I will not be tempted. You would feel burdened after awhile, and wish that you had been less rash."

He drew back, a change passing over his face.

"Do you really think that? Is that your opinion of me?"

"Yes."

"Then I will not trouble you any longer!"

And before she could make any reply, he had left the room, and the house.

A moment of breathless silence, and then she called to him to come back—that she had overrated her own strength—she could not make the sacrifice. But he did not hear, and only the children rushed in to tell her it was time to go home.

The next day she returned home, and to work; but not much satisfaction did she feel, and none at all when her mother, in one of their long confidential talks, told her it was her dearest wish to see her married.

Allie never breathed a word about her brief romance, but she laid her head down on her mother's knee, with a long, quivering sigh.

When she returned home from work, one evening, a few weeks later, her mother innocently crushed the last lingering hope she might have cherished, by telling her that a gentleman had called to see her.

"A Mr Roy Stuart, from Australia. He called to bid you good-bye before starting to Australia."

"To Australia? Then I shall never see him again," she thought, pale and faint with bitter disappointment.

After that she settled down in earnest; and when, a year from the date of her marriage, Lettie wrote, urging her to take another holiday, she consented, knowing that to keep up her strength she must rest occasionally.

Her happy friend had a thousand things to tell, but not once did she mention Roy Stuart's name, and Allie could not question her.

In the evening she went into the parlor and sat down, as on that other evening when she had so rashly thrown her happiness away. She looked into the fire, so busy with bitter sweet memories she did not hear the door open, or turn to see who entered, until a well-remembered voice said—

"Good evening, Mrs. Wootton, Arthur ——"

She sprang up, then, with a joyful cry.

"Mr. Stuart! Is it possible?"

Then they stood, hand clasping hand, looking at each other with silent lips, but eloquent eyes.

"I thought you were in Australia," said Allie at last, her glance falling.

"No; I returned a few days ago. Can it be true you are glad to see me?"

"Is it hard to realize?" she said, in a low—very low—tone, her cheeks deeply flushed.

"Oh, yes, very hard, after your unkind treatment the last time we were together in this room."

"Did I behave badly?"

"Yes, cruelly."

"And is it too late to make amends?"

Her eyes were sparkling, and a demure little smile played round her lips.

"Not if you——. Allie, you are not trifling with me?"

"Do I look like it? Oh! Roy, I have been miserable!" she cried, tears rushing to her eyes.

"And so have I, my darling!" he said, drawing her near to him.

"It was all a mistake. I could not be strong minded, and sacrifice myself; and then—and then, it was not desired. If you had not been so hasty——"

"And if you had not been so distrustful. Dear wife of mine, kiss me, for forgiveness, for joy, and then for a pledge of future peace. That dream home seems very near to-night."

It soon became a reality, and no one felt so sincerely and unselfishly pleased as the invalid mother, who soon found that she had gained a son instead of losing a daughter.

Lettie was triumphant.

THE Belle and the Burglar: "Little did I think—" The bold, bad burglar gazed at her earnestly: "Dat de New Woman would take up me line of trade!" The woman he addressed recoiled. "Sir, you are mistaken! This—" her anger overcome her fears—"is merely a complexion mask." The midnight marauder smiled. "Ah!" He conjured her to silence with his sinister aspect—"Dat puts another face on it!" Satisfying himself that all of her engagement rings were of the real stuff, he swiped the lot.

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A GIRL'S TRIALS.

There is little joy in this mundane state;
'Tis a disappointing world;
She looks a fright when her hair is straight
And it won't stay curled when curled.

We cannot have everything we like;
Of that she is certain quite;
She is criticised when she rides a bike
In the garb of a bloomerite.

If she laces tight the reformers laugh,
If she doesn't lace at all
The set on the other side will chaff
Till her life is filled with gall.

They'll talk of her if she treats her beau
In a decent kind of way;
If she at a distance keeps him, lo!
She's a little prude, they say.

She's quite too bold if her ways are bright
And her spirits are often glad;
She's a dowdy if she's at home at night,
If she ventures out she's bad.

Her conduct seldom approval brings
However her mind is bent,
It's a fact, and if we were her, by jings,
We shouldn't care a cent.

B. C.

A thing of the past—Yesterday.

A twin propeller—A baby coach built for two.

The latest unpleasantness—Finding the keyhole.

Crooked work sometimes leads to financial straits.

Mending his ways—The fellow who repairs the scales.

Some people have so little music in them it seems a pity that they should let any of it escape.

Ethel: Do you allow Charles to kiss you when you are not yet engaged to him?

Maud: It isn't an allowance. He calls it a perquisite.

A minister, carrying some of his old sermons, was asked what he had in his package.

"Dried tongue," was the reply.

Photographer: Now, sir, if you'll look a little less as though you had a bill to meet and a little more as though you'd just been left a legacy you'd be a picture.

"Mr. Scribbler is a wonderful man—such a variety of talents."

"I've noticed that. In society he is a lion and at home a bear."

Benevolent old gentleman: Have you no trade or occupation?

Totterdon Torn: Yes, sir; I'm a glassblower. Give me a nickel and watch me blow the froth off a glass of beer.

Briggs: Miss Cobble is a great horsewoman, isn't she?

Griggs: I should say so. She was taken ill the other day, and they sent for a veterinary surgeon.

"Did you ever rough it in the West?"

"Oh, yes."

"In the mountains or on the plains?"

"Well, really, you know, I was in a boarding house!"

Looking up suddenly, she beheld the bearded face of a man, with a gleaming knife between his teeth. Then she fainted. It was no wonder, for she had been carefully reared, and had never seen anyone eat pie in that manner before.

Mr. Sauer, to his wife: How horrid of you to be always looking as sour as a crab apple! Just look at Mrs. X——, over yonder, the very picture of cheerfulness.

Mrs. Sauer: You seem to forget, my dear, that Mrs. X—— is a widow.

Lad of ten: I say, pa, what is the meaning of these numbers at the bottom of every picture? Look at this one, Shakespeare, 153.

Perplexed father, who has never been in a gallery before: Oh!—ah!—I expect that is his telephone number!

Hojack: What on earth do you want with that wagon load of onions that was dumped into your cellar to-day?

Johack: I feed them to my daughter to cure her of a wild hallucination.

Hojack: What's that?

Johack: She imagines she's old enough to have beaux.

Blufkins wrote a very bad hand generally, but in writing hurriedly, making an appointment with a friend, he excelled even himself. He had left the letter lying for half an hour, and, on going to address the envelope, he happened to glance at his epistle. Scarcely a word could he decipher, but, calmly inclosing it, he said to himself:

"After all, what does it matter? It's Hawkins has to read it, not I."

A certain clergyman was exhorting those who had troubled consciences to be sure and call on their pastor for guidance. Said he, "To show you, my brethren, the blessed results of these visits to your pastor, I will state to you that only yesterday a gentleman of wealth called upon me for counsel and instruction; and now to day, my friends—to-day he sits among us a happy husband and father and a Christian."

A young lady in the audience whispered to a matron, "Wasn't that pretty quick work?"

A LONG SPEECH.—The longest speech on record is believed to have been that made by Mr. de Cosmos, in the Legislature of British Columbia, when a measure was pending the passage of which would take from a great many settlers their lands. De Cosmos was in a hopeless minority. The job had been held back till the eve of the close of the session; unless legislation was taken before noon of a given day, the act of classification would fail. The day before the expiration of the limitation De Cosmos got the floor about 10 A. M., and began a speech against the bill.

Its friends cared little, for they supposed that by 1 or 2 o'clock he would be through, and the bill could be put on its passage. One o'clock came, and De Cosmos was speaking still—had not more than entered upon his subject. Two o'clock—he was saying "in the second place." Three o'clock—he produced a fearful bundle of evidence and insisted on reading it.

The majority began to have a suspicion of the truth—he was going to speak till next noon and kill the bill.

For a while they made merry over it, but, as it came on to dusk, they began to get alarmed.

They tried interruptions, but soon abandoned them, because each one offered him a chance to digress and gain time.

They tried to shout him down, but that gave him a breathing space, and, finally they settled down to watch the combat between strength of will and weakness of body.

They gave him no mercy—no adjournment for dinner, no chance to do more than wet his lips with water, no wandering from his subject, no sitting down. Twilight darkened; the gas was lit; members slipped out to dinner in relays, and returned to sleep in squads, but De Cosmos went on.

The speaker, to whom he was addressing himself, was alternately dozing, snoring, and trying to look wide-awake. Day dawned, and the majority slipped out in squads to wash and breakfast, and the speaker still held on. It cannot be said it was a very logical, eloquent, or sustained speech.

There were digressions in it, repetitions also. But still the speaker kept on; and at last noon came to a baffled majority, livid with rage and impotence, and a single man who was triumphant, though his voice had sunk to a husky whisper, his eyes were almost shut and were bleared and bloodshot, his legs tottered under him, his baked lips were cracked and smeared with blood.

De Cosmos had spoken twenty six hours and saved the settlers their land.

PRAISE AND BLAME AS MORAL EDUCATORS.—No one need fear bestowing praise with too liberal a hand, if he but observe two precautions—first, that he is perfectly sincere, and expresses only the degree of pleasure or admiration that he really feels; and, second, that he praises only what is truly good and worthy of being reproduced. Blame may be far more sparingly dealt out, for it is a less effective agent, and generally succeeds best in the hands of those who use it the least; but both are valuable moral educators when with faithful sincerity and guided by an intelligent desire to promote the good and diminish the evil that we see around us.

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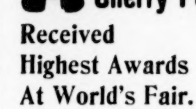

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like SAPOLIO should make everything so bright, but "A needle clothes others, and is itself naked". Try it in your next house-cleaning

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What folly it would be to cut grass with a pair of scissors! Yet people do equally silly things every day. Modern progress has grown up from the hooked sickle to the swinging scythe and thence to the lawn mower. So don't use scissors!

But do you use SAPOLIO? If you don't you are as much behind the age as if you cut grass with a dinner knife. Once there were no soaps. Then one soap served all purposes. Now the sensible folks use one soap in the toilet, another in the tub, one soap in the stables, and SAPOLIO for all scouring and house-cleaning.